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ABSTRACT

This report begins by noting that newspapers are now producing cable television programs, leasing cable channels, and selling cable advertising; thus the first half of the report consists of articles examining that trend. The articles explain why and how newspapers entered the world of cable, why one newspaper dropped cable, the success of one newspaper's experience in cable, the changing role of a journalist, how newspapers pay television reporters, how to estimate the cost of cable, and the telepress experience. The second part of the booklet consists of articles that deal with other aspects of newspaper journalism, covering such topics as (1) graphics scanners, (2) pagination, (3) new portable terminals, (4) electronic library systems, (5) telecommunications, (6) newspaper databases, (7) radio news, (8) robotics, (9) the cost of features, and (10) journalism education in colleges. (HOD)

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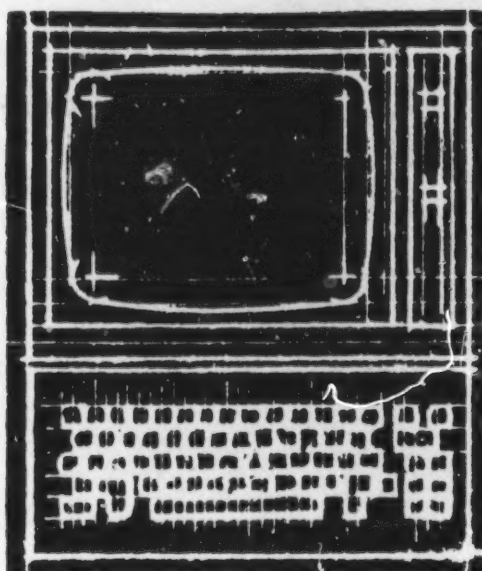
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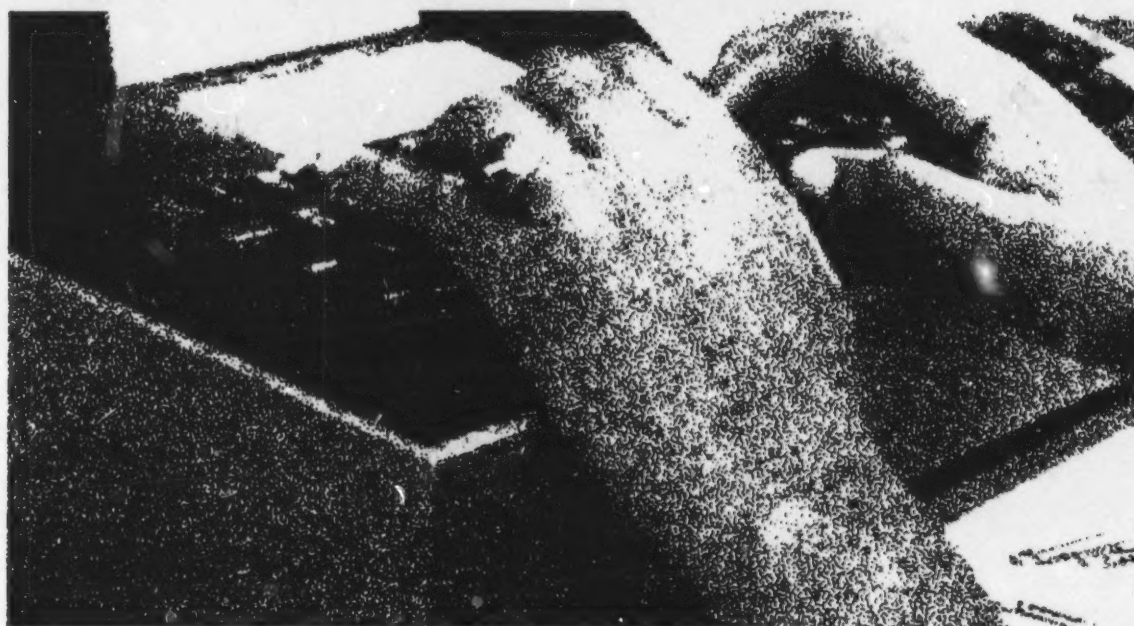
**Telecommunications
& Technology**

Louisville, Ky. — Nov. 1-4, 1983

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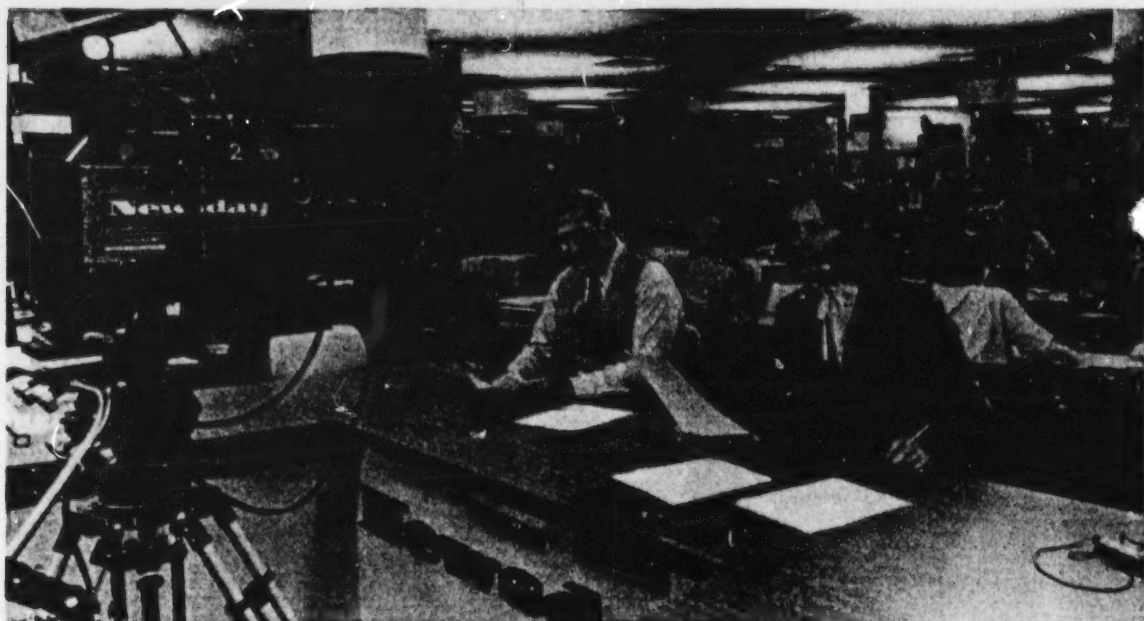
Foreword

Once, newspapers concentrated on gathering and *printing* the news. But that luxury has long since gone by the boards. Network television was competition enough — substituting immediacy and action for a newspaper's dignity and detail.

But now another culprit has invaded the living room — cable television. And because it competes for a local advertising dollar as opposed to a national dollar, it could be far more dangerous.

So newspapers are reacting in the only logical way. They are producing cable television programs, leasing cable channels and selling cable advertising. The first half of this book is devoted to that new trend.

Newspapers that entered the world of cable tell why and how. One that dropped cable explains why. And in a survey conducted by this committee, newspapers involved in television explain how they paid employees who went from paper to the tube.



Host Bob Greene and co-anchor Karen Hasby on the set of "Inside Newsday."

The Newsday Channel: A Case History

By Paula Cohen
NEWSDAY

On May 1, 1983, Newsday launched a cable television channel on Cablevision's Long Island system, the second largest U.S. cable system. The Newsday Channel is included in the basic package transmitted to over 180,000 homes in Nassau County and parts of western Suffolk County in the one-way service Cablevision offers.

According to Newsday's cable manager, Julie Raynor, The Newsday Channel is an experiment set up to explore the potential of different forms of electronic delivery for current and future applications. Newsday, the largest evening newspaper in America and the one read by over 65% of the adult population of Long Island, plans to continue providing leadership in information services in its market in whatever form that may take.

The channel combines the resources of the newspaper staff with video and videotex technology,

along with additional staff trained in delivering electronic information services. As such, it is intended to complement the newspaper, not supplement or replace it.

The company spent two years researching and planning the start of the channel. Newsday used a committee approach to planning, involving members from various departments in problem-solving and goal-setting.

From the beginning, Newsday's intention was to give the cable viewer a total information package, and this remains the objective of the channel. Such a package includes news, features and advertising information. According to Raynor, "On both the text and the video side, we have a wide array of programming we think serves as many market segments as possible. Plus, we've scheduled our programming tightly to make it accessible to people with many interests."

As a subsidiary of the Times Mirror Company, Newsday gained from the experience of the Times Mirror Video System market test of two-way systems in southern California. This test indicated a clear

CABLE TELEVISION

EVENING

- 6:00 - Hourly Report
- 6:10 - Entertainment/Movie Re-views, Listings
- 6:30 - Theater Reviews
- 6:40 - Restaurant Reviews
- 6:50 - Museums
- 6:55 - Local Events
- 7:00 - **SPELLING BEE**
Newsday begins its video broadcasting with a special taped broadcast of the finals

9:00 - NEWSDAY SAMPLER
An hour-long special showing excerpts of featured information shows the channel will present week

10:00 - INSIDE NEWSDAY
The debut of Long Island's own nightly news program featuring Bob Greene, Karen Hasby reporting complete news of the island with help from the reporters and

market for electronic information services, but the cost to Newsday to provide those services with a two-way system at this time would be prohibitive.

As soon as the service concept was chosen, the data processing department started to implement and debug technical systems that could support that concept. Preliminary programming and advertising concepts grew from the newspaper's strengths and market needs as well as from research. Sales and promotion were designed to be consistent with the programming planned to build a unified effort for an effective launch.

"The key is to view the start not as a culmination but as a beginning. You have to constantly re-evaluate the product and improve the service so you can launch, what we call in the TV business, your second season," said Raynor.

On any given weekday, there are five hours of video programming. One-and-a-half hours are first-run programs. The remainder are repeats.

Regularly scheduled video programming consists of the mainstay show, "Inside Newsday," a one-hour nightly news program hosted by Newsday assistant managing editor Bob Greene, and four half-hour news and feature shows moderated by Newsday editors and reporters. "Inside Newsday" is taped about two hours before air-time at a desk in the newsroom of the newspaper, with additional interviews shot in a nearby studio and film crew footage added as needed. In addition, coverage of special events sponsored by the

newspaper is scheduled as part of the video package.

The regular weekly video programs are "Cable News Conference," "Street Signs," a program which examines the economic and business news of Long Island; "The Critics," a look at the world of art and entertainment, and two segments of "The Newsday Magazine," a feature show spotlighting the home, health, and popular Newsday columnists.

Text programming is divided into four parts, which are repeated several times during the day. Text packages contain entertainment information, a Long Island reference guide, features and an updated news service.

The channel has 31 people on staff; 19 on video and 12 on text. About one-third of the staff was hired from within the newspaper organization. The other two-thirds, mainly on the video side, was drawn from outside the newspaper. The strength of the video staff is in the experience it brought from many other sources, including other television and cable stations.

Staffing was done in phases. Internal staff was hired first, assuring the maintenance of the "Newsday approach" to the start-up of the channel. Those people hired from outside the newspaper brought valuable technical expertise in video production which contributed to the relatively smooth start of the channel.

David Targe, Newsday executive vice president-marketing, says The Newsday Channel is selling all forms of advertising, including 30- and 60-second

forms of advertising, including 30- and 60-second spots, informercials, display ads produced by the channel's Telidon technology and classified text ads.

Classified advertising is transferred from the newspaper's computer, which interfaces with the Atex Cable Publication System used by the channel. Display advertising must be designed and produced by cable artists using the alpha geometric graphics system using Telidon software, some of the most sophisticated technology available for use in illustrating text. Both display and classified advertising benefit from the brilliant colors and share resolution Telidon provides, according to Newsday's advertising staff.

Said Raynor, "We learned from observing other newspaper cable ventures that it's an expensive undertaking if the goal is to deliver a high-quality product. So, we decided to build on existing resources as much as possible to keep the cost increases incremental. For instance, we use the classified sales staff already in place to sell our cable classified. Those ads are relatively inexpensive to produce, since they are transmitted electronically to our cable computer systems and automatically processed into graphic pages."

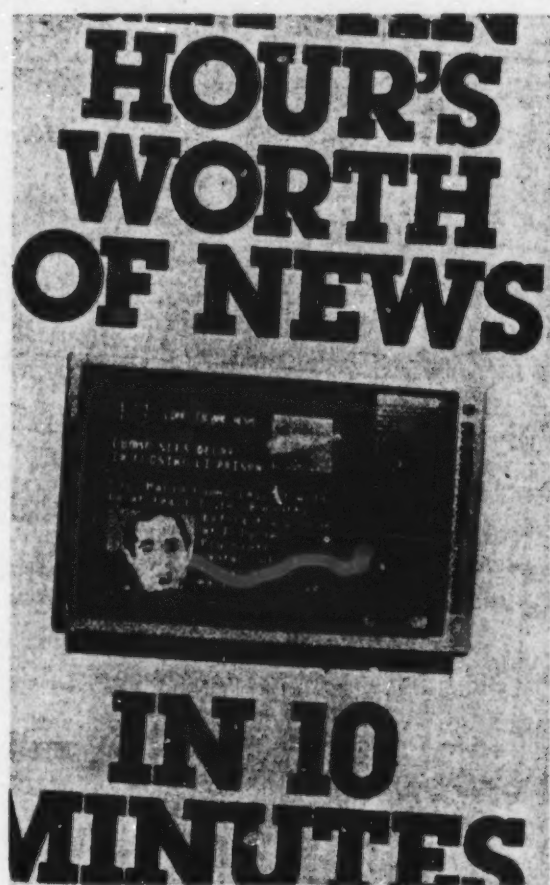
Current display advertising accounts range from small- to medium-sized local retailers. One, a gardening supply chain, is taking advantage of the inexpensive opportunity for producing targeted informercials, which run six minutes, three times daily, at the extended spot rate.

Raynor continued, "We use our editorial staff on video shows as hosts and as guests on panels and debriefing sessions. Doing this provides us with a variety of top-notch talent, and it's in keeping with our plan to complement the newspaper rather than replace it, or the people who've made it one of the best papers in the country."

For the nightly news show, about four reporters are asked to appear each night. Usually, three of the reporters are those who have covered the top local stories of the day. These tend to be the non-visual, complicated stories, in which a reporter's knowledge of what went on behind the scenes is a great help in explaining the story to viewers. The interview lasts about five minutes. Stories that do well in this treatment include ones about regional master plans, politics, analyses and trends.

The fourth reporter is usually a specialist, chosen on a rotating basis from among different departments in the newspaper, to discuss such topics as consumer affairs, food, health and business.

Having the news show studio in the newsroom makes it convenient for reporters to appear on camera without taking much time from their work for the next day's newspaper. Plus, the channel finds viewers are interested in seeing the person behind a byline.



Since the television staff is so small, the newspaper staff must provide most of the legwork, even on short stories that are read for 30 seconds. The TV crew, with one ENG unit, produces two or three taped field pieces each day.

Since the news show's deadline is hours earlier than the paper, cooperation is needed to get information to the TV news desk on developing stories and on stories that are killed or held. In some special cases, the newspaper desk will ask that a story be embargoed until presstime.

The feature shows also use the newspaper's writers and editors for talent. For example, the Long Island editor hosts the news conference program. Critics for the movie, dance, books and music pages appear on the culture show. A health writer hosts a health segment on the video magazine. These appearances, since they are done at the cable system's studios a few miles away, require careful coordination with the supervising editors in order to not disrupt the newspaper work. ■

An Outline Sketch For Cable Success

By Julie Raynor
NEWSDAY

Objectives of the Newsday Channel

- A. Establish wide-spread MARKET PRESENCE for electronic information services; therefore, we chose one-way cable. We now reach 180,000 households on Long Island.
- B. Create a 'TOTAL INFORMATION PACKAGE' of news, features and advertising. Narrowcasting, much as the newspaper does.
- C. Explore the potential of different forms of electronic information delivery (TEXT AND VIDEO) for current and future applications. Historically, advertising and consumer expenditures have been transferring from print to electronic media. This trend will likely continue. Therefore, we want to be well-positioned for the future of information services in whatever form, print or electronic.
- D. Offer a high-quality service due to the competitive programming in our market; and use the capital and staff required to accomplish this.
- E. Utilize the existing resources of the newspaper, wherever appropriate: editorial, advertising, data processing, research, promotion.
- F. Complement the newspaper. Not supplement as an adjunct, or attempt to replace. What is the most efficient way to present information — electronic or print?
- G. Through the above objectives, protect REVENUE base in the long-term.
- H. To do this, we wanted to determine the best fit among:
 - viewer's information needs
 - advertising needs in marketplace
 - competitive voids
 - technological capabilities
 - newspaper resources of different departments.

Project Planning

- We planned the project for two years before launching the channel.
- We used a COMMITTEE approach with members from different departments, because of an objective of using the newspaper's resources. Also, this approach was used because of our corporate culture

that values interdepartmental committees for problem-solving.

- Another element in the planning — learned from experiences of a Times Mirror Video Systems market test. TMVS conducted an extensive test of two-way electronic information systems in Southern California which illustrated:

- clear viewer interest in electronic information services
- significant cost of interactive system at present and confirmed our interest in one-way at present.

- LEARN from experience of other newspapers. Major learning included:

- newspaper-cable service is an EXPENSIVE undertaking if goal is high-quality. Therefore, should build on existing resources to the extent possible so that the cost is INCREMENTAL and not full.

- For instance, we use classified sales staff to sell classified. Relatively low incremental electronic cost, since classified ads sold for cable are electronically transmitted to cable computer systems and automatically processed into graphic pages. Also, low sales cost since sales staff is in place.

- Use editorial staff to appear on video shows: provides a variety of talent and incurs the incremental cost of host fees or overtime rather than the full cost of additional staff.

- Another element in our planning was that in addition to using our newspaper resources, we needed to integrate outside video resources, since we were including the new operation of video; we recognized that we required outside expertise in this new field.

- As a result of this planning, we made the following decisions:

- Establish a separate departmental unit, including members from different disciplines,
- Hire both internal and external staff,
- Integrate department with the newspaper and build on newspaper's strengths,
- Accomplish this through top management commitment,
- Commit sufficient resources to produce a high-quality product.

Schedule

A major lesson learned from this project is the

optimal sequence for phasing-in different activities, given sufficient lead time.

Optimal sequence for implementing the elements is:

- Decide on a service concept. What is the best fit among your resources as a newspaper, the market, the available technology.
- Implement and debug technical systems to support the service concept. The service concept should always predate technical system development. So much now is possible technically that the service should not be designed around convenient technologies, but rather in response to the newspaper's strengths and market needs. For us, technical systems included an Atex cable computer system, Telidon graphics creation terminals and video production.
- Develop preliminary programming and advertising concepts, using technical systems that work. If systems are not debugged, programming and advertising may have to be revamped in light of changing capabilities of the systems.
- Research preliminary programming and advertising concepts.
- Refine programming and advertising concepts, based on research.
- Develop sales and promotion concepts, based on accepted programming and advertising plans. The sales, promotion and programming plans must be consistent.
- Sales effort.
- Finally you're ready to produce programming and ads for your launch.
- Once you start, the key is to view the start not as a culmination but as a beginning. A beginning of continual efforts to re-evaluate the product and improve the service so that you can then launch what we call in the TV business your second season.

Project Description—Programming

- The Newsday Channel is a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week channel that was launched May 1.
- Service concept is to provide a total information package, including news, features and advertising, in both text and video form.
- One-way cable service transmission to 180,000 households on Long Island, New York, on Cablevision's Long Island systems, second largest U.S. cable system.
- Now, to describe our video and text programming, and advertising. Video programming consists of "Inside Newsday," nightly one-hour news show, and five weekly features and public affairs shows. All shows rely heavily on reporters and editors on staff, provide the inside story on the reporting process

and have a Long Island emphasis.

- The mainstay, "Inside Newsday," consists of debriefs with reporters, face-to-face interviews with newsmakers, on-site coverage of leading Long Island news, segments on health, weather, sports.
- Five, half-hour weekly shows:

"The Critics"

Explores the world of the arts, including movies, theater books, music. With critics, artists and performers.

"Street Signs"

About Wall Street and Long Island business.

"Cable Press Conference"

With politicians and newsmakers on Long Island.

"Newsday Magazine"

Discusses lifestyle features with reporters.

Text programming

Consists of four information packages: news (hourly reports), entertainment reviews (movie, theater), features (health, technology) and a Long Island Guide (with reference information).

Project Description—Advertising

Overview

Selling all forms, including 30- and 60-second spots, infomercials, Telidon display ads, classified text ads. Near sell-out since May 1, 1983.

Accounts — small-to-medium sized local retailers, broad range of advertisers.

Video

- 30-, 60- second spots repeated three times per day.
- Infomercials. Extended commercial that combines consumer information and product information. Ideal vehicle for cable because smaller retailers can use TV advertising at a lower rate and can target the market more effectively. Example — Real Estate.

Text

- Using Telidon — Most sophisticated graphics technology for illustrating text.
- Display — Available — 12 minutes each hour, 20-second exposure, eight times per day.
- Classified — Available — 150 minutes per day, 20-second exposure, two times/day; advertisers — largely private party. Classifications include: Wheels, For Sale, Personals, Real Estate, Employment.

Project Description—Operations

Text

Cable publication system is installed and at this point, is largely but not totally debugged.

- Interfaces with our editorial and classified Atex sys-

terms. Used to create news, information and display advertising pages that integrate text and Telidon graphics.

- Automatically processes classified ads sold for cable, create pages of these ads within classifications of Wheels, For Sale, Personals, Real Estate and Employment; integrates appropriate graphics on each screen.
- Schedules all pages so that there is a continuous flow of programming during the 24 hours each day, and so that the appropriate programming is displayed at all times.

Video

Installed video studio is the newsroom.

Equipment includes: three minicameras, editing system, titler, master control facility. One camera crew goes into the field each day to cover three to five major Long Island news events, to provide our own footage. We use two minicams to shoot the nightly show and preproduce segments.

We're investigating the use of microwave or satellite to transmit the service to Long Island cable systems.

Project Description—Research

Critical at this point to learn more about viewers' reactions so that we can continue to develop programming that is useful to viewers.

We are conducting comprehensive research, including focus groups, quantitative research, panel, survey.

- Conducted focus groups several months before channel began showed us that Long Islanders are high information users. Also suggested some changes in text service.
- Benchmark questionnaire before we started — info usage, shopping patterns.

Results

Heavy TV viewing — four hours daily, of which over two are cable; Interested in movies, news and sports; High information usage; Cable demographics are somewhat higher than the Long Island market; Fairly high percentage of people known as 'early adopters' — who purchase new products, and particularly new electronic products.

- Focus groups six weeks after start.
- 600-household phone interview to assess viewership one month after start.
- Quantitative follow-up to benchmark questionnaire.

Project Description—Promotion

- Newspaper: educate market about general nature of our channel — now we have specific promotional campaigns about particular programs.

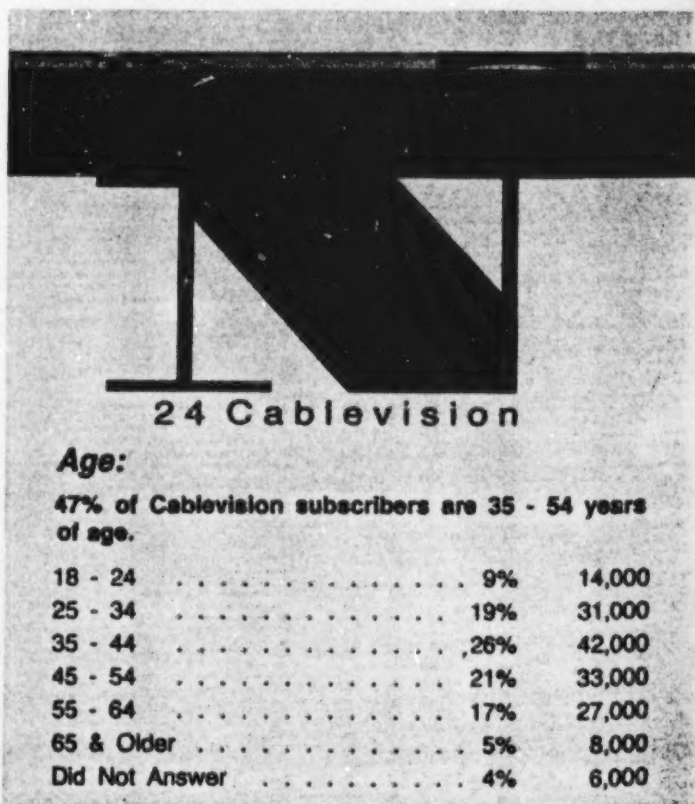
- Cable
- Radio
- Billboards

Integration of Text and Video

One of the aspects that differentiates our service and influences the staffing is the integration of text and video.

I'd like to discuss why we decided to mix text and video. Decision was based on the following:

- We want to gain viewership through a product of maximum competitive appeal, in order to be appropriate for our particular market. Our market is the eleventh largest SMSA in the country. In addition, the majority of cable subscribers have pay tiers, with sophisticated video programming. We want to be competitive with the quality of programming in our market.
- We felt such a channel could satisfy a market niche. For although we want to compete on quality, we are not competing on content. There is no dedicated 24-hour information service on



Excerpt from Newsday's cable viewership research data.

Long Island, and we want to fill that programming void. We are positioning ourselves as providing a unique and useful service currently not available in our market.

- We want to explore the potential of a variety of electronic media. Historical patterns of consumer and advertising expenditure show that electronic media have been receiving more attention and dollars than print. All indications point to a continuation of this trend. Therefore, we want to gain experience in a variety of forms of electronic information delivery.

Text and video each offer a different potential.

Text offers the potential to explore a new graphics medium (Telidon), to learn more about database management, to update news and information throughout the day and is a potential prelude to more advanced forms of electronic information delivery (e.g. teletext, videotext).

Video offers the potential to fill a media void in our market, to transfer successful in-depth journalism to a different medium, and to appeal to viewer interest in the "inside story."

Also, the two media have the potential for being used together. We use Telidon graphics as visuals on the video shows. We are exploring video infomercial advertising as a supplement to text advertising, e.g. in real estate.

Economics of Text and Video

Our approach to cost-effectiveness is to use the newspaper resources as much as possible. We call this incremental economics. By using the existing staff and computer systems in place at Newsday, much of the cost is the incremental cost of additional effort of the existing staff, rather than the full cost of a totally separate operation.

Now, I'd like to discuss in more detail the different cost structures of text and video. The two parallel operations have provided us with an opportunity to contrast them as businesses, since we are pursuing both with the same quality standards.

Capital

The capital resources required for text and video differ depending on the level of complexity of the service. On the low end of complexity, it is possible to launch a text service less expensively than video because the minimal capital required is less, e.g. a character generator is sufficient for a 24-hour text service.

In our case, we wanted to launch a service at a high level of sophistication and quality. At this level, it has proved about twice as expensive on the text side than video, because the minimum capital required for an integrated computer system is more than the minimum required for a few cameras. Video equipment can be expanded in stages more easily than sophisticated text editing and graphics equipment.

Staffing

The Newsday Channel has 31 people on staff; 19 on video and 12 on text. The breakdown is 15 people working totally on video, eight working totally on text, and eight with responsibilities in both. Video staff includes, executive producer, producer-director, two anchors, four writers, five engineers and one clerk. Text includes, one program supervisor, three artists, one writers, and two inputters. Staff with responsibilities in both; myself, program manager, advertising manager, operations supervisor, advertising coordinator and secretarial support.

For purposes of comparing text and video staffing, it is useful to divide the staff into so-called "talent," including writers, editors, artists; and

CABLEVISION VIEWER PROFILE

Occupation of Chief Wage Earner:

50% of Cablevision subscribers are professionals and managers.

Professional/Technical	28%	44,000
Executive/Managerial	22%	35,000
Clerical/Sales	9%	14,000
Foreman/Craftsman	4%	7,000
Skilled Worker	18%	28,000
Unskilled Worker	3%	5,000
Student	3%	400
.....	5%	1,000

Newsday

"production," including engineers, computer operations, advertising traffic staff. We have found that the "talent" component required is about equal on the text and video sides. However, the production staff is much heavier on the video side. Video productions require a camera crew, tape editors, audio engineers, titler operators, directors. Text production, in contrast, can be highly automated, as we have done, therefore requiring fewer staff in operations.

This, then, has been our tradeoff: Heavier text capital, and heavier video production staff.

Now, I will discuss several issues in staffing and some lessons we learned. I will conclude by discussing why we chose to organize the way we did — within the newspaper rather than as a separate division.

Internal vs. external mix

We decided to combine, beginning with internal and adding external. *Advantages of internal:* Knowledge of Newsday, its employees and "Newsday approach;" *Advantages of external:* Experiences at other services.

Timing

Phased versus concurrent. Decision: phased staffing because it was difficult to hire so many people at once.

Staff skills

• Artists:

- translate knowledge from one medium to another.
- work on different products, including editorial, advertising, promotion and video.
- not afraid of new technology or computers.
- layout and design ability.

• News:

- excellent news judgement.
- adapt one medium to another; full text to abstract.
- combination of analytical and operating skills.
- quick and accurate; hourly deadlines.
- page layout skills.

• Video:

- on-line skills of production.
- interpersonal skills to integrate a foreign operation within an established organization.

• Operations:

- knowledge of a variety of systems.
- patience with unexpected problems, due to the interface of many different technical standards. For us, this included AteX, Telidon, cable, telephone.

• Sales:

- ability to educate own sales staff and the advertisers about a new medium, in addition to sales ability.

Staff Attitude

As important as skills are attitudes of individuals,

concerning the following: flexibility, start-up, creativity, time and effort commitment, interaction with other staff.

• Flexibility:

Must be able to accept changes in roles as optimal organizational structure evolves. Must be able to accept changes in direction as daily re-evaluation occurs. Can occur in areas ranging from type size to editorial/advertising ratio. We decided to increase the type size after focus groups and therefore had to reformat two months of database we had created. Patience. In addition, we decided to double the amount of advertising available from six to 12 minutes per hour, and, therefore, had to redesign the programming formats and content. More patience. And an attitude that no past effort is wasted because re-evaluation leads us to change.

Must be willing and interested in serving as BACK-UP, particularly if operation is small. Everyone must be cross-trained and must have a positive attitude towards expanding their skills.

• Creativity:

Must be highly creative, to evaluate what is appropriate to transfer from other media; e.g. graphics design can transfer layout concepts from billboard design. For portraits, black/white photocopies of photos present effective tools for tracing because they accentuate contrasts between light and dark; transfer programming, sales and graphics concepts from newspapers, magazines, television (animation), radio.

• Interaction:

Must interact greatly with other staff members, to resolve an infinite number of operating issues (e.g., mix between editorial and advertising — is product more like newspaper, with 65/35 split, or more like TV, with 12 minutes of commercials per hour?).

• Time:

Must be willing to invest significant time and effort.

Using the Newspaper's Resources

Editorial

- programming ideas generated by editorial staff together with cable staff.
- reporters and editors serve as hosts and guests on video shows.
- journalistic quality standards maintained by transfer of some staff from editorial to cable and by oversight by publisher.
- breaking news is shared among text, video and newspaper.

Advertising

- highly successful sales force uses incremental time to reach existing network of advertisers.
- existing classified computer system with ads elec-

tronically stored can further manipulate the ads with incremental software.

Data Processing

- knowledge of existing Atex computer systems that the cable system interfaces with editorial, classified.
- knowledge of systems and the effect of changes in one part of a system on other elements.

Promotion

- can promote the cable channel in ways that build on the strong identity of the newspaper in the market, e.g. tie the cable promotion to newspaper promotion themes.
- can cross-promote. Can use the newspaper to promote the cable programs. Can use the cable to promote newspaper series.

Research

- Knowledge of the market
- information interests, shopping patterns and demos.

Employee Relations

- valuable assistance in helping us staff, using their knowledge of the strengths of Newsday's internal re-

sources, the external market and our project's staffing needs.

Conclusion

This, then, is the heart of our concept, to have cable build on the strengths of our newspaper, and to then use both the newspaper and the cable service to complement each other so that in the long-term, Newsday protects its information franchise in our market.

In order to do this, the key in staffing is a flexible and adaptive approach towards product development. The technological possibilities are expanding daily. The market needs for information are changing. It is critical that the staff and the organizational structure encourage a constant re-evaluation and development of the information product so that the newspaper is as well-positioned as possible to offer information useful to consumers, in whatever medium they prefer. ■

The Changing Role of a Journalist

By Thomas Collins
NEWSDAY

I happened to see a longtime newspaperman shaving himself in the middle of the day at Newsday recently, and I understood at once how his life had changed. He was no longer just a print journalist; he was both a print and television journalist and he was getting ready to go on, as they say in show business.

When a newspaper reporter "goes on," it means he sits down at his video display terminal and begins to stare vacantly into space. But in TV, it's different, as other Newsday reporters and editors have discovered since the newspaper launched a 24-hour cable TV news channel last month.

As part of one of the most advanced experiments with teletext and video programming in the country, they have been shunting back and forth between mediums, sometimes on a daily basis. The Newsday project involves a one-hour nightly news program, printed summaries of news stories on the TV screen, commercials, classified and display advertising, and a scattering of magazine and interview programs with Newsday staff members as hosts and guests. The paper launched itself into the electronic newspaper

age through an arrangement with a local cable company, Cablevision.

The centerpiece is "Inside Newsday," a one-hour TV news program, which has many of the characteristics of local TV news shows and which originates in the newsroom. In effect, the paper has invited the archival of newspapers into the building, where it has established a beachhead consisting of an anchor desk, bright lights, video cameras and all the other stuff that goes with television newscasting, including a measure of chaos.

Every evening the lights come up and glamor begins. While reporters work at their desks on stories for the next day's newspaper, "Inside Newsday" begins taping its nightly report. "Stand by," says the director, which is probably the first time the phrase has been used inside a newspaper operation, and another page in what may be a chapter in communications history gets under way.

Newspapers have been eyeing cable television for some years as a potential extension of their basic information and advertising service, and some newspapers and newspaper groups have established videotex operations in which the printed word is grafted to the TV screen. But while other news organizations are still in the hand-holding stage, Newsday and TV

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Karen Hasby.

have set up housekeeping. Whether they will eventually marry and live profitably ever after only time will tell.

"We want to be sure we remain the prime information base for Long Islanders, no matter what the delivery method," publisher David Laventhol told employees recently, explaining why the paper had launched the venture. "In the meantime, we will protect our marketplace and learn how to use electronic home delivery. . ."

"The intention is to develop a system that will eventually pay for itself and become profitable," which may be two and a half years away, said Robert M. Johnson, Newsday president. The newspaper has invested a "substantial" amount in the enterprise, he said, including hundreds of thousands of dollars in video equipment. Both executives emphasized that the TV operation is aimed at enhancing the newspaper, not replacing it.

"Mother Newsday is Mother Newsday," Johnson said, "and always will be."

Around the city room, however, during the first few weeks of bright lights and cameras, there were

times when it appeared that the upstart newcomer had designs on the whole operation.

The national and business news operations were shoved back to make room for the anchor desk; Anthony Marrow, the managing editor, was bumped from his office to give the monster more space, and the lights got into everybody's eyes. Editors and reporters within camera range had to cope with the sound of the anchor team, consisting of assistant managing editor Bob Greene and Karen Hasby formerly of Channel 21, delivering the newscast, and technicians hustling around the room pinning lapel mikes to reporters' chests.

With two separate news operations coexisting under one roof, both using the paper's 162 reporters as their principal newsgathering resource, the potential for getting into each other's way was considerable. So far, snafus have been kept to a minimum. Newsday reporters covering a story on deadline have sometimes been asked to put down their notepads and pick up a microphone, and they often have to stop their work to brief the television writers on last-minute developments. Desk editors have to keep the TV operation in mind as they prepare their daily news budgets.

With only one camera crew, the program is often longer on talk and shorter on pictures than a full-fledged television news show, but it contains an ample supply of local, national and international news, along with weather, sports and stock prices. Because it is taped in the evening for 10 p.m. viewing, it sometimes misses late-breaking stories, as occurred recently with an arrest in a murder case.

"We had tape that night," said Greene, "but it was too late to get it on. So you wind up getting beaten, which is terrible. I've always been a competitive person."

While the TV operation relies heavily on the reporting and editing staff, the newspaper operation also has benefited from occasional tips from the TV side. "It's not an adversary relationship," said Newsday Editor Anthony Insolia. "The television operation is based on using Newsday reporting resources and that is what we are doing. If ever there is a conflict, the priority goes to the paper, and everybody understands that."

The television operation, the result of an arrangement between Newsday and Cablevision of Woodbury, runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and has a potential audience of between 180,000 and 300,000 homes in Nassau and Suffolk. It includes 19 hours of teletext information — printed stories that use the most advanced graphics — and five hours of video programming, which include a "Newsday Magazine" show, a business report and column-type commentary.

The presence of TV in their midst caused some dismay among reporters at first, but they soon adjusted. "I felt my territory was being invaded," said reporter Marie Cocco, "but it's part of the fabric now and it certainly hasn't affected my work."

One of the features of the nightly news program is the exchange between reporters and Greene, which is similar to a reporter briefing his editor on a story he has just covered. It is a format that has been used a few times elsewhere with mixed success, but not in a newspaper city room, and its presumed virtue is that it adds a note of realism to the report.

While there was some apprehension among the staff about adapting to the new medium, the bright lights soon proved attractive to many. "Some reporters were visibly shaking when they came up," said anchorwoman Hasby. "You could hear their papers rattling." But they quickly got over it and have proved articulate and well-informed, she said. "Some are not as smooth as professionals, but that's part of the charm."

Columnist Ed Lowe compares going before the TV camera with getting used to talking into the bottom of a Coke bottle. "I thought I wouldn't like it, and I did," he said. "I thought I would be intimidat-

ed by it and I wasn't. Once I got past the Coke bottle, I was fine."

The cameras' presence has brought about other changes in the print reporters' workday life. Some people are dressing up more and new haircuts have been spotted. One male reporter is reported to be using eye makeup, but I haven't had the nerve to ask him if it's true. The staff is also rating each other's performances.

"On a scale of 10, I gave you an eight," one reporter told Aileen Jacobson, who writes about personal finances.

"Is that good?" she asked.

"Sure, you're being judged," says George DeWan, a Part II writer, "by not only what you say but also by how you look and how you say it. It's pretty strange. I've always kept the two mediums separate in my mind and now you can't do that anymore."

The fellow who shaves himself every afternoon is Stan Isaacs, the sports-TV columnist, who gives a daily sports report on "Inside Newsday."

Do people recognize you because of your TV appearances? I asked him one day.

He answered, "Only in the hallways." ■

How Newspapers Pay TV Reporters

By Gary Deckelnick
ASBURY PARK PRESS

When the Home News of New Brunswick, N. J., decided to enter the world of cable television, managing editor Ralph Williamson sought volunteers to appear on the screen.

"We got 31 of them," he said. "But we couldn't use them. The guild said they couldn't appear without being paid. We explained we were not making any money, only experimenting."

"We weren't even selling any advertising. But we didn't want to get into any argument with the guild. We used only exempt people, supervising editors."

Across the country, at the San Diego Union and Tribune, Copley News Service was preparing to enter cable television. There would be no people on the screen — only words and graphics. But there would be news — culled from the data base of the Union and Tribune.

"It was an item for discussion by the guild during negotiations," recalls Peter Kaye, a Union associate editor on leave to manage the cable television venture. "But it was only an experiment, so nothing ever came of it. I guess it was just put off for future discussions."

There is no guild at The Asbury Park (N.J.) Press, so the editors there had less trouble when they asked for and received volunteers for their TV plans.

As The Press' original plans expanded and the experiment became permanent, however, Press editors took the initiative to prevent potential problems.

They began paying all on-camera performers \$50 for each 30-minute broadcast.

The experiences of those newspapers are common. More than 100 newspapers, according to an ANPA survey, are involved with, or plan to be involved with, cable television. To editors, it makes only good sense because the newspapers already have the data base needed to deliver news on a home channel.

But what happens to the reporters and editors

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who write the news — or who appear on camera (live or taped) to read the script? Are they paid above and beyond their normal salaries? If so, how much?

A random survey of newspapers involved with cable showed two distinct categories — those using teletext only and those using people.

Without exception, those newspapers using only text do not pay their reporters extra money when their stories are used on cable.

Cable editors asserted they use only information from reporters — information that would be available if cable news officials merely purchased the paper on a newsstand (although the information would then be available much later).

To conform to teletext format, the stories must be substantially rewritten — and limited to six lines of 32 characters.

"We're essentially a headline service," said David Reed, editor of TelePress, the cable TV operation of the Lexington Herald and Leader, one of the few places where trouble developed with a guild about a teletext operation.

At Lexington, TelePress has access to anything typeset for the newspaper. The guild had no objection to that — but it wanted jurisdiction over the three full-time people hired by TelePress to rewrite and condense the stories. The guild won in arbitration.

At the Minneapolis Star, the trouble was more serious. The guild flatly refused to permit the reporters' stories to be used without extra compensation.

"I think the two situations are not analogous," said Reed. "Our channels are available to anyone who has a cable television system. At Minneapolis, they were connected to The Source (a private data base). If you wanted to access their channel, you had to have a home computer and pay a fee."

Those cases, though, have been few. More frequent is the situation in Urbana, Ill., where the Champaign-Urbana News Gazette operates two channels of text — one classified and one news.

"We use all the local news and there is no objection from our reporters," said Linda Bauer, the TV general manager. "We rewrite them all."

The situation changes, however, when performers appear on the screen. At Newsday, where assistant managing editor Bob Greene is in charge of producing 90 minutes of live programming each day, the guild became involved from the beginning.

Greene anchors most of the newscasts, and the paper hired professionals with television experience to do some reporting. But they also use some reporters on the air — usually for brief interviews, five minutes or less — about a major story they covered.

"We negotiated their appearances with the

union," said Robert Tiernan, program manager. "As soon as they are on, it's at least 30 minutes of overtime. There is a complicated formula, and how much they actually receive depends on how long they are on and why they are on."

"If they make a 10-minute appearance on one of our feature shows, they get at least one hour of overtime. If they do a commentary, they get at least two hours of overtime."

The sliding scale assumes the appearances occur during what otherwise would be a regular workday. If the appearances occur before or after regular work hours, then the reporters also accrue their normal overtime.

Other papers have followed different plans.

In Omaha, both the World-Herald and Cox Cable are owned by Cox Newspapers. Both are headquartered in the same building. But the two companies are separate, and the cable system pays the newspaper a flat fee for permission to use its news.

Even without paying the reporters, the one-year-old experiment is still operating in the red. To help out, the newspaper is forgiven its fee and the cable system gets the news without paying the contractual charge.

Reporters who appeared during an experiment run by the Eau Claire, Wis., Leader almost were volunteers. On the rare occasions when reporters did appear, they were paid \$5. But the appearance was usually two minutes or less.

The paper never even considered paying reporters whose stories were selected to be rewritten on videotext.

"You would have nothing but reporters who wanted to chase the big stories, to go after the fire," said Mark Atkinson, who handles the cable project. "There would be no one in the city room willing to take the obits."

At the Worcester Telegram and Gazette, the cable program is mostly Teletext. But the newspaper, which also owns radio station WTAG, does three newscasts daily.

"We use a radio person," said Steve Solomon, news editor. "It's still an experimental thing and since it's broadcast, we consider it a part of their broadcast duties. It's done during the time when they would normally be working anyway."

At the Asbury Park Press, even the moderators, who are employed by Press Broadcasting Co., a subsidiary of The Press, receive extra pay for appearing. But that is to achieve parity with the reporters who appear. The Press uses its own reporters and also invites guest reporters from other newspapers to appear on one of the two 30-minute news programs it produces every other week. ■

How to Estimate the Cost of Cable

By Robert L. Anderson
COURIER-JOURNAL AND
LOUISVILLE TIMES

The Courier-Journal and Louisville Times' reasons for getting into teletext were distinctly personal: The Louisville newspapers own a minicomputer software house — Dissly Research Corp. — and were in a unique position to exploit that connection to enter a developmental relationship with the French Antiope Videotex Services (now Videographic Systems of America).

Dissly got us started in teletext at lower cost and lower risk than other newspapers might have had. But once we got there, our experiences — and expenses — are probably not much different from those other publishers might encounter.

By way of setting the scene: The Courier-Journal and Times operate a conventional character-generated text service on a leased channel on both major cable systems in the Louisville market. That gave us a teletext distribution medium that we ourselves control. It

also gave us a staff experienced in creating brief text items for television screens.

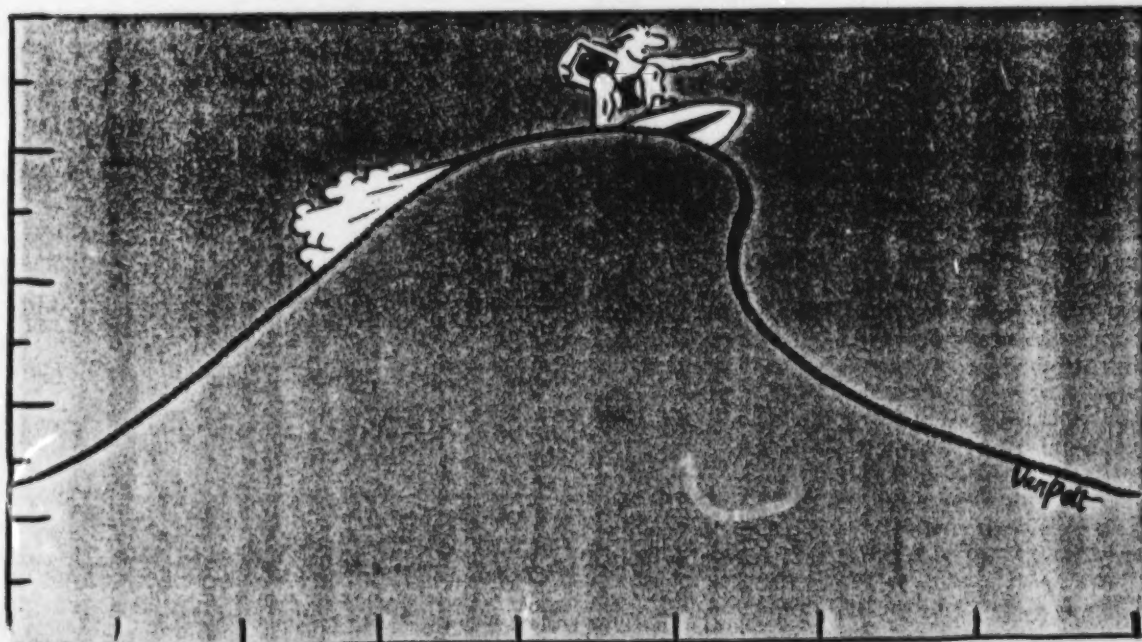
With the medium, staff and technical issues lined out, let's get down to some practical operational matters: equipment, staffing, and costs.

Our teletext equipment consists of a French-made Unitel page-creation terminal set up by Dissly to also handle communications with Dissly's teletext database management system. As a page-creation device, the Unitel's output can be stored either on a dual floppy disk system capable of keeping 100 pages per disk or on the Dissly teletext system, which has a 300-million character hard disk.

All editing for both cabletext and teletext is done on Atex terminals. We have one in our area; other cable/teletext editors work on unused newsroom terminals.

Text is sent from Atex to the Dissly system over 9600-baud leased data lines. Atex treats both the cable and teletext systems as peripherals, like a printer or typesetter. The key at the newspaper end is to keep things simple.

There are 100-page teletext inserters at both



John Van Pelt

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cable headends. Text pages are automatically updated every hour. Ads go in at the top of the hour, news goes at the middle of the hour. A single command can send a page in without waiting for the automatic update.

There's a handful of assorted modems to get the text from our place to Dissly and from there to the headends. Data lines cost just under \$1,000 a month.

Other than the ubiquitous Atex terminal, teletext and cabletext do not share hardware. This isn't what we'd want in the long run. The ideal would be to adapt the teletext hardware to run the cabletext service, too, bringing teletext's higher-quality display and graphics to the open-channel service at a cost that cabletext's lower revenues could justify.

What about staffing? We put on two and a half editors and got half the time of a staff artist. The pay slots average about \$30,000 a year, including benefits. We had three and a half editors for cabletext, so we raised the staff to seven.

Editors work on both cable and teletext. We split the work by content not display medium. Editors handle the same stories on both media. The artist, while drawn from news art, works on both news and advertising.

At this stage, we're giving the ads away. Thus there is NO ad-sales staff for teletext. While most cabletext classified is sold by or regular phone-room sales people, we did put on a cable-only salesperson to drum up contract advertising. If we WERE selling teletext advertising, there'd be no change in classified. As for display advertising, our experience is that it's a print medium displayed on a TV screen. Nothing we've seen says newspaper space salespeople couldn't sell teletext.

(However, VIDEOTEX is another matter. If we started a videotext business I'd recommend a separate sales staff for reasons too complicated to get into here.)

How about cost? Payroll for teletext runs about \$130,000 a year, including benefits and fringes.

As for hardware: Our cabletext costs are embarrassing low — under \$40,000 for Video Data System character-generator equipment. Teletext is a developmental co-venture with Videographic Systems and Dissly Research. As a result, we're using a lot of computers and decoders free in exchange for testing. But here are some rough teletext hardware costs:

DEC PDP-11 and disk drive	\$35,000
Page creation terminal	25,000
Modems	200
Software	35,000
Insertion card	25,000
Decoder	2,000

That's about \$125,000 to operate on a single cable system, \$150,000 for two. In addition, we have \$130,000 worth of decoder-equipped sets for the in-home test.

Let me stress that the CJ&T teletext test is riding free on the cabletext project and newspaper support staff, but based on our experiences, it wouldn't be unrealistic to put operating expenses for a basic teletext business at \$500,000 a year plus cable channel lease charges.

Now for revenue: At first glance, teletext seems to have some problems there. Who's going to advertise on a medium with an audience measured in hundreds?

Broadcast TV faced the same problems barely 35 years ago. I'm not saying teletext will equal TV as an ad medium, but as sets with built-in decoders become available in commercial quantities at prices people can afford, teletext can become an excellent advertising medium.

And as cable operators move to addressable cable converts — not because of teletext but for pay-per-view programming — teletext should be able to generate subscriber as well as advertiser revenue. That's when a publisher will have an opening to take his electronic editions to a full cable channel and offer virtually an entire newspaper: news, sports, features, display and classified ads, and COMICS.

While we're blue-skying, let's go stratospheric and look at some potential revenue figures for teletext as compared with cabletext.

In Louisville, we're only offering classified ads on cable. At its worst, cable classified has grossed \$10,000 a month for us. At its best, it has brought in as much as \$20,000 a month. The average is midway between those extremes.

The revenue potential of my blue-sky subscriber-supported teletext system dwarfs that. With 10 percent penetration in Louisville and Jefferson county — 25,000 households — paying \$1.50 a week, annual subscriber revenue would be \$1,950,000.

Ad rates — and sales themselves — are a huge question mark. But the demographics of those 25,000 households would be an advertiser's dream: high-income, early adopters, people willing to spend money for convenience.

First, looking at classified, 450 to 500 people a day are paying \$1.10 to put up cable classified ads that at best are likely to reach about 20 percent of 110,000 cable subscribers. Let's assume that double that number would pay \$2.50 to reach teletext users. The revenue there would be \$2,500 a day — \$17,500 a week — \$910,000 a year.

Going even farther into outer space, let's do some highly unscientific conjuring on display advertising. For sake of discussion, we'll price full-page ads

at \$50 a day and partial pages of the type shown on the slides at \$30 a day. We'll charge \$50 an hour for page creation — use of artist and terminal. Fifty ads — half full-page, half partial — would average \$40 a day. Now let's drop in 25, two-line "reefer" ads — directing users to larger ads on other pages — at \$10 apiece. We're talking \$2,250 a day — \$921,000 a year — plus maybe \$100,000 for page creation and artwork charges.

We've just conjured up a business doing close to \$4 million a year. That's 1983 dollars — although I personally think that scenario is five to seven years off.

That brings us to my personal projections of the growth potential of teletext compared with cabletext.

Right now, teletext is a developmental medium. There aren't any decoders available at prices people will pay (\$2,000 a pop isn't a mass medium). Next year isn't likely to be a whole lot better.

But 1985 to 1990 is another story. The growth curve for teletext is going to be sharply upward. The companies on board when that climb starts will show excellent returns on their investments by the time the growth curve peaks in the early '90s and teletext becomes a maturing business.

Cabletext never had teletext's growth potential. It's a dead-end medium. Visually, it's static. For consumers, it's frustrating to have to wait for information. Its graphics are less sophisticated and are likely to stay that way, given the high cost of better graphics in relation to cabletext's revenue potential.

Some people are still getting into cabletext, but given the economics of cable there aren't many cost-effective opportunities left. In a few years, cabletext will be a fossil.

So getting down out of the stratosphere, why am I so bullish on teletext?

First — allowing for the fact that much of the equipment is prototype — teletext looks like it will work. It's easy to use. Our test participants were given one-page instruction sheets and that's all of the training they needed.

The teletext decoders we used are already obsolete, so our experiences may not be applicable to the next wave of decoders. But for what it's worth, our test found that U.S.-made Signatech decoder boards were much more reliable than French-made Thompson boards. Not a single Signatech board failed, while more than 20 of 55 Thompson boards died. That tells me that attention to quality and good manufacturing can produce decoders that will survive in the American home.

Our Dissly Research teletext system software let us automate page-creation, teletext magazine updating and operation to a degree unknown elsewhere. We couldn't have run a teletext operation with so few

people without that software.

Like the overall teletext system hardware, it works. It reports what it's doing plainly and its commands were programmed to be very much like our Atex system's. That's important because we didn't want to spend six months learning to use the equipment for a six-month test. In fact, the staff learned the basic operating commands in a few days.

Once we got our teletext into people's homes, what did they like? Basically, local news, weather, sports and entertainment guides do well. Classified ads — especially jobs and real estate — are popular among housewives. Is that for comparison shopping, curiosity, or what? We hope to find out.

People like the quick-in, quick-out nature of teletext. Several users like being able to jump in to check the stock market — and racing results — in just a couple of minutes. If there is a strong content criticism, it's the inability to get more frequent updates — especially of local news.

Graphics are well received — even though they are relatively crude mosaics. People like imaginative, brightly colored graphics.

They want more product advertising — prices and comparison — less business card or billboard types of ads. They want more classified ads to be available at one time and to have a greater selection of classification running in any given hour. There are 29 pages of classified — one cover page and 28 ad pages with two ads per page.

Avid newspaper readers are less complimentary of teletext. They say there isn't anything there they couldn't get more easily and in greater detail in their paper.

A number of people said they'd like to have both the news briefs we're running and the option of calling up longer, more detailed accounts.

Overall, we found teletext to be more complementary to our newspapers than competitive. This is highly preliminary, but what we heard indicated that teletext appeals more to younger people who are information consumers but not committed newspaper users.

It seems that teletext offers us a chance to increase our reach as well as frequency and to build a new, parallel business based on our proven skills and strengths as print information providers.

So what happens next with CJ&T Teletext? It's in the last of its four test phases. We'll shut down the test next month and spend the next few months looking at the results.

I think teletext will be like surfing: The Courier-Journal and Times won't make the wave, we'll ride it. When the broadcast networks — CBS and NBC — and the TV manufacturers make that wave, we want to be ready. ■

CABLE TELEVISION



Jeff Jordan in the control room of the Omaha World-Herald's cable news operation.

Recalling Cable's Origin at the World-Herald

This report was prepared by Jeff Jordan, who formerly worked for the Omaha World-Herald.

When executive editor Woody Howe invited me to lunch that Wednesday in mid August 1982, it was not to chat about my daily column on the back page of the paper. Though when the meal was over, so was the column.

I couldn't know it then, but I was about to immerse myself in three months of 14-hour days and seven-day work weeks. My past had come back to haunt me. Twenty-seven years of bumping about in broadcasting, mostly as a newscaster, was about to be focused on something the electronic media folks were calling "narrowcasting."

After more than a year of bargaining, the Omaha World-Herald had signed a series of contracts with Cox Cable and was about to step off into the world of down links, head ends, time-base correctors, pixels and alphanumerices.

Howe laid it out for me that day: I was to be Cable News Editor, the day-to-day manager of the news and production operations of a newly formed company to be called Cable News, Inc., wholly owned by the World-Herald. John Gottschalk, the paper's vice president for management would provide overall direction for CNI's business end. Terry Aussenbaugh, his assistant, would be CNI's acting general manager and my boss. I was also to answer to Howe on editorial matters. I was to hire a staff, train it and in six weeks begin originating hourly live newscasts from the paper's newsroom on Cox's channel 22.

Four weeks after that, on or about November 1, I was to institute a 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week text news service on channel 23. And a month after that I was to launch the World-Herald's input into Cox's interactive service on Channel 23. And a month after that I was to launch the World-Herald's input into Cox's interactive service, Indax. That would involve the writing and editing of up to 200 video "pages" or electronic frames of news, sports,

weather and classified ads; its editorial content to be updated four times daily.

Our participation in the Indax service would be as close to the "electronic newspaper" concept as we could imagine. For an extra fee, cable subscribers would be equipped with special converter boxes with 20-button key pads, allowing them to access Indax as well as the other 40-plus channels being programmed by Cox.

With his miniature terminal, the subscriber could on demand, summon up not only specific World-Herald stories or classified ad categories but could access his account in any of several Omaha banks, transfer funds, pay bills, or shop by wire in what has to be an electronic market place. His children could play educational games or even look up their astrological forecasts for the day.

That December deadline for our participation in Indax came and went and, at last word, Cox had postponed its startup of Indax for at least two years. The marketing strategies, we were told, were being revised on the basis of research in San Diego, home of Cox's largest cable system.

As it turned out, we needed the time to devote to other, more pressing matters.

How Do We Do It?

At that first August meeting, Howe presented me with a bare-bones organizational chart. With 12 to 14 employees, CNI was to originate its programming from within the building, it would own and maintain all its hardware and it would sell its product to advertisers wherever they could be found. In short, it was to be a new profit center for the parent company, affiliated with Cox Cable only as an independent contractor using the wire network to reach its viewers.

During the World-Herald's early negotiations with Cox, it was agreed that one channel — 23 — would be fully leased and would carry our text news service, an endless series of automated electronic "frames," each carrying a brief news story or an ad spelled out in color graphics and words. The audio portion was to be uninterrupted music.

The other channel was to be partially leased, that is live newscasts of short duration were to be inserted hourly in the programming of a national news network. For a time it seemed as if we'd be affiliated with Ted Turner's Cable News Network, the oldest of the cable news organizations. But that presented problems for us.

The "window" in CNN, that is, the time allotted to local cable operators for insertions of news, was only two minutes long, just before the hour. Had we followed the lead of the Des Moines Register, which entered the cable fray in late 1981 aboard CNN,

we'd be limited to news capsules of a minute's length, probably bracketed by two 30-second local commercials.

However, CNN was the only cable news game in town and had been since 1980 when Cox began building its Omaha system. That changed in June, 1982, when Westinghouse Satellite Communications and AEC Television launched the Satellite News Channel. It was a good-looking, fast-moving professional operation and, most important to us, it had designed a five-minute hourly "window" into its format.

Plainly, the chance to offer 3½ minutes of local news and 1½ minutes of commercial time was a distinct advantage for us, outweighing the pre-eminence of CNN as *the* place to be for news on cable.

The decision was made. Cox added SNC to its lineup, commencing service on its channel 22 on Sept. 1, 1982. Our local news inserts would begin Oct. 4, a Monday.

But we had a long way to go, and as the song says, a short time to get there.

Instant TV Station

The purchase of the hardware we'd need had long been arranged, if not the hiring of the people to run it.

For perhaps 18 months, the World-Herald's systems development specialist, Ron Culton, had been assembling a shopping list and soliciting bids from audiovideo specialty houses for a complete package. Though more a computer whiz than a television engineer, Culton listened and learned from suppliers and TV types. He also consumed a mountain of technical specs, carefully weighing equipment capability and delivery time against price.

In the end, he bought a hand-picked package of hardware from Triangle-Audio visual division, a school supply firm with offices in Omaha and two other midwestern cities. It was a good choice and a bargain to boot.

For under \$200,000 Culton was able to purchase nearly everything we needed to begin, though the purchase orders were not signed until our contracts with Cox Cable were confirmed in August.

Culton's turnkey decision was to design the system around Sony ¾-inch videocassette tape decks, three of them to be rack mounted in our first-floor control room. We later added a portable, battery-operated Sony deck for recording and editing in CNI's newsroom, adjacent to the control room. Sony, I knew from my broadcast days, enjoyed an excellent professional reputation and its ¾-inch tape gear is found in TV newsrooms everywhere.

Each of the rack-mounted tape decks relies on its own time base corrector (for better editing and dub-

CABLE TELEVISION

bing from one deck to another) and all are funneled through a programmable EchoLab SE-3 video switcher (capable of handling up to 10 video sources) and an accompanying Sony video editing console.

The video director's control room position also utilizes three Panasonic 13-inch color monitors (TV sets), eight rack-mounted black-and-white monitors, camera controllers, power amplifiers, sync and color bar generators and the other gear necessary to provide a relatively sophisticated studio control setup for broadcast-quality production.

The audio half of the control room uses the same high quality gear for sound: A Tascam M-30 audio console (capable of handling eight microphones or other sound sources), a rack-mounted Tascam cassette recorder (as a record-keeping device for recording the audio portion of newscasts) and a Teac reel-to-reel recorder.

The Teac was purchased to provide taped music background over the channel 23 text news, but has been largely unused since we opted to join Cox in subscribing to simpler, ready-made satellite music service offered by the Seeberg Corp.

The control room is also equipped with a Sony test monitor and vector scopes for setting picture and color to measurable specifications, a Buhl double-carousel slide projector with its accompanying switching controls and a 3M routing switcher (a rack-mounted push button panel that allows simple, but effective switching from camera to camera if the EchoLab switcher should fail).

We Lose Our Cool

Culton now admits one near-fatal omission from his original control room hardware list: a stand-alone air-conditioning unit.

Even as late as November, control room temperatures soared with the heat output of all that gear crammed into a 20-by-12 foot room. The building's air handling system could not assume the additional burden, though we'd been assured it could. Time base correctors failed when their internal temperatures reached 100 degrees and more. Tape decks squealed in protest. We bought fans and mounted them in the equipment racks. An exhaust fan was brought in to suck cook air through a vent cut in the door and out through the ceiling vents.

In the end, we had to spend another \$1,500 on our own cooling system, mounting it in the false ceiling space where, fighting us to the end, it rained water down on us until we modified its plumbing. My budget still bears the scars.

Of all our purchases, studio cameras were the principal big-ticket item. Culton got me in the act by putting two Japanese makes side-by-side in the

World-Herald newsroom in the area where our news anchor desk would eventually be built. We compared them, under both portable studio lights and ordinary ambient fluorescent lighting.

The JVC cameras were a shade better in their performance, though they are said to be a little more fragile than some competing models. But then we were not anticipating a hard, fire-truck-chasing life for them.

Given the marginal difference in picture quality, the decision came down to dollars: about \$10,000 each for the JVCs with motor-driven zoom lenses. To put it bluntly, we could have had three of those for the cost of two of the other make we tested.

And that's how many we bought: two mounted on studio pedestals for the newsroom anchor desk and a third without a viewfinder to be permanently mounted in the Buhl slide projector in the control room. Several months later we added a fourth JVC for use as a battery-operated field camera. It was, with the portable Sony tape deck and a Quick Set tripod, intended to provide on-location shooting capability for what we hoped would be a profit-making commercial production unit, though that expectation is still largely unrealized.

The Ivory Basement

While Culton's hardware shopping was going on, he was also making drawings of the work space to be occupied by the new subsidiary.

CNI was to occupy less than 950 square feet in an interior portion of the first floor of the World-Herald building. The largest room of the then-open space was to be the CNI newsroom, between the company's tiny office and its compact control room. Apart from equipment purchases — desks, file cabinets and such — the remodeling was accomplished for less than \$1,000, including drop-in ceilings, modular walls, venting and lighting.

The newsroom also would house work tables for two new HendrixHastech video display terminals, tied into Editorial's front-end editing system, though on the backup computer, not the primary. Newscast scripts would be printed out in multiple copies on an Extel printer.

Incidentally, one other fairly expensive piece of equipment was added later — a teleprompter, a device which allows a closed-picture of the newscaster's script to scroll past the lens of one studio camera. Making it work for us was an interesting exercise in our operative theory. "We will make it go."

Since all writing and editing was to be done on VDTs, we wanted no prompter system that required re-keyboarding the scripts onto separate sheets. By experimenting with the new prompter (which we ob-

tained on approval), we decided that 37 characters per line gave us an image large enough to read from the anchor desk. The newspaper's electronic maintenance staff then modified the software to our Extel printer to give us justified lines not exceeding 37 characters. We could not, however, adjust the left margin so that copy would print on the right side of the sheet, as is standard in commercial television.

We found an effective, if perverse, solution. We ran the prompter backwards, putting the copy in at the wrong end. We also remounted the vidicon camera that "reads" the copy, turning it 180 degrees in its mount so that the image seen by the newscaster is not upside down. The hand-held control that adjusts the speed at which the lines of copy appear also was taken apart and mounted in the surface on the anchor desk, permitting it to be controlled by the newscaster.

We use three-ply paper in the printer — the top copy going into the prompter and the other copies each torn into convenient pages — to the newscaster and the director. The newscaster's copy is later initialed, filed and held for 30 days.

The newscasts themselves would not be delivered from CNI's quarters, but from the busiest portion of the World-Herald's newsroom 150 camera cable feet away on the second floor. This was a critical decision and one we've never regretted.

It was made in large measure because of a visit made to the Des Moines Register more than a year earlier.

Glass Houses and Cuss Words

About a month after the Register began its cable venture in 1981, Jack Holly (then our managing editor), Culton and I journeyed to Des Moines to have a look. We learned some valuable lessons.

The Register had elected to house its cable operation in a glassed-in studio overlooking its newsroom. It was workmanlike, though on a much more modest scale than what we anticipated. It utilized one full-time editor newscaster working with one fixed camera, a single monitor and one videotape cassette recorder. All newscasts were prerecorded and sent by microwave to the cable company's head end a few minutes before air time. There, a technician would edit the commercials (sold by the cable company) onto each end of the news capsule and, at the appointed time, play them back on the system.

Those newscasts, though brief, were well done. They were assembled and delivered with professional skill and through the window behind the newscaster the viewer could see in the distance the workings of the Register's newsroom.

It was that concept we wished to utilize, but we

felt it was worth the gamble to capture the noise of our newsroom as well as the sight of it. We elected to put our anchor desk where the action is, out in the open, so to speak, without the inhibiting glass surroundings and the extra distance that involved.

We blocked out shots, backing the two cameras up against the west wall of the newsroom. Our entire "studio" space is 10 feet wide and 14 feet deep, putting the anchor desk less than a dozen feet from the lenses, but it's what lies behind it that makes the difference. The wide shot (used at the open and close of each newscast and on the two-second transitions before commercials) shows most of the desk, the newscaster and immediately behind him, a panorama of the City Desk and the Sports Department stretching another 30 feet beyond it.

The tight shot on the other camera picks up head and shoulders of the newscaster and behind the news editor's slot and most of the center aisle pedestrian traffic.

It is impressive and the envy of television stations that've tried for the same "nerve center" look, but with newsrooms and staffs a fraction of the size.

The background sound is typical newspaper: a not-intrusive hum of conversation and terminal keyboards, punctuated occasionally by police monitors.

In justice, it got a little too authentic on one occasion. In the midst of a female newscaster's broadcast, a lively discussion of the shortcomings of a certain story dominated those at the city desk. Anglo-Saxon expressions of outrage filled the air and the ears of our newscaster. She, an unshakeable sort, smiled and plunged on, wondering how much of it could be heard at home.

None, thanks to the directional mike tucked close up under her chin, but it was a moment to consider again the Register's glassed-in booth.

People: 'Them,' 'Us'

We had carried away from Des Moines another important concept that, in a sense, reinforced our own attitudes about what we intended to do and now we would do it. That was the strong feeling that CNI ought to be an integral part of the World-Herald "family." From the beginning, the Register had made its intentions known to its people, soliciting their help in the cable project and assuring them it would be the newspaper's venture, not an invasion by outside media hotshots.

In September last year, our newsroom, with cameras, lights and some new, non-newspaper people made the danger of a "them-versus-us" polarization seem at least possible.

We fought off the threat on several fronts. In an editorial staff meeting arranged by Woody Howe, I

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laid out our plans, invited participation and answered questions. I must say I was grateful then that I was not required to present myself as an outside television person. I was and am print-oriented. And it didn't hurt my case that I'd worked cheek by jowl with those reporters and editors for nearly four years.

We also worked hard to make our physical presence in the newsroom and non-invasive as we could make it. Though our cameras focused on the busiest part of the room, they themselves are out of any traffic pattern. So is the anchor desk. We kept lighting to the lowest level consistent with decent pictures. Only three of the five 500-watt spots are pointed toward the newsroom and all are equipped with barn doors and scrims — devices to soften the light and direct it only to the anchor desk.

They are permanently mounted on the ceiling, eliminating light stands and hanging cables. We repeatedly checked with nearby editors to ensure that glare and light splash were not interfering with their work. In one case we raised the rear end of a terminal on the metro desk, effectively eliminating the glare on the screen.

Except during the September construction phase, noise — ours — was never a problem. It is, after all, just one person reading in a conversational tone. A color monitor which stands between the two cameras is capable of producing sound, but its volume control is never turned up, even during newscasts when the newscaster might benefit from hearing the last line of a pre-taped interview.

Nor is there a crew of CNI people trooping in and out with every newscast. We operate without camera crew, floor manager or teleprompter operator. Except when a newscaster is doing his or her first newscast of the day, he arrives alone. HE turns on his own lights, uncaps the camera, turns on the prompter, puts on a microphone and hides a miniature earphone in one ear. He is thus able to communicate with the control room at any time. The exception is during a shift change when the newscaster is accompanied by one person who sets and focuses the camera shots and then locks them in place.

Finding The People

From the beginning, the staff of CNI was a mix of World-Herald people, broadcasters and blind luck.

Ausenbaugh, CNI's general manager and a former retail account executive, left the operations and editorial decisions largely to me, concentrating on what he knew best: the business and sales aspects. He quickly brought in an office manager from the paper's retail advertising department. She now handles accounting, payroll, purchasing and tax matters. She's assisted by a part-time, minimum wage clerk.

Two other women were added, comprising the sales staff. One took a cut in pay from circulation where she'd been a training supervisor. The other was a younger applicant with some experience in the traffic department of a local TV station and in selling print advertising for a weekly and its associated shoppers. They work for base salaries, though there is a commission incentive program, as well. Thus far neither has achieved the volume necessary to put it in force. Selling cable, especially the text service, is, as they've discovered, no easy chore.

On the news side, we operate with 12 staffers, divided equally between the production and news departments. One full-time director functions as production's department head with two more full-time and three part-time directors splitting the schedules. The news operation involves a full-time news editor (he does not appear on camera), three full-time newscaster editors and two part-time editors. At this point neither of the part-timers appears on camera. Like the news editor, they've been print reporters for a suburban weekly and are not yet comfortable before the red lights.

Full-time salaries (excluding my own) range from just over \$11,000 to about \$17,000 annually. The median is probably close to \$15,000. Part-time salaries run from minimum wage to \$5 per hour, though we've paid \$6 to a part-time newscaster now departed. CNI's total monthly payroll averages between \$16,000 and \$17,000 depending on overtime and training hours.

One former World-Herald staffer came aboard with the inception of CNI. She'd been an editor and had no television experience whatever, but she is a gadget freak, one of those types who'll struggle with any kind of hardware until she knows as much about it as its designer. She's now a full-time director, one of our best. Her presence was invaluable, especially in the early months, training new people in the intricacies of the VDTs and designing systems and formats for the news text channel, now identified as World-Herald Newabriefs.

The man who's since been elevated to production manager was the next acquisition, though luck played a large part. He'd had nine years of daily news show directing under his belt at the top-rated Omaha TV station, but opted to launch his own production firm just as the recession hit. The business went under, but we got him. He provided the nuts-and-bolts know how we needed at the beginning, training the other directors in his own cool and unflappable methods. One was a 17-year-old high school intern who for months has been able to run the control room on her own.

Finding newscasters was and has been another matter. We had thought originally that we could fol-

low the Register's lead, using the paper's reporters on an hourly basis, renting them outside their regular hours to write and deliver newscasts. It's a good concept. All can write quickly and well, they know the paper's style and standards, they don't need to be trained on VDTs and most are mature enough not to be rattled by a television camera. But the job CNI took for itself was too demanding and too labor consuming to be dealt with by a dozen or 50 volunteers. We were not doing taped one-minute capsules that could later be repeated. We began with 14 live newscasts a day and that output has now been increased to 17 daily (nine on Saturdays and Sundays) — 103 every week. And, of course, we added the 24-hour-a-day Newsbriefs to the burden in November.

We did solicit that kind of staff help and many reporters were interested including surprisingly, some veterans I'd have guessed would have little love for such an enterprise. Unfortunately, as I looked at the schedule scenarios I'd modeled and the haphazard hours of most World-Herald reporters, the probability of success diminished. And in many cases the money we could pay for evening or weekend was too low to be attractive to most of them.

Though we never advertised outside the building, the word got around. We were swamped with applicants — some from smaller papers, but many from local radio stations. Each was required to write a newscast and then deliver it on camera in a makeshift studio we fashioned from a spare office. Not unexpectedly, those with broadcast experience — particularly radio — wrote the fastest, had the best understanding of what they were doing and looked the most comfortable and authoritative on camera.

From them we chose two radio news people as full-time newscaster. Both were working news beats at local stations and wanted the opportunity to break into television. Two part-time newscasters also were hired, one from radio and the other with a TV news internship behind her. Neither stayed with CNI, nor have they done similar work since. Three or four other part-timers have come and gone while another, a recent journalism-school graduate, hung in steadfastly and was recently added to the full-time staff. She earned it.

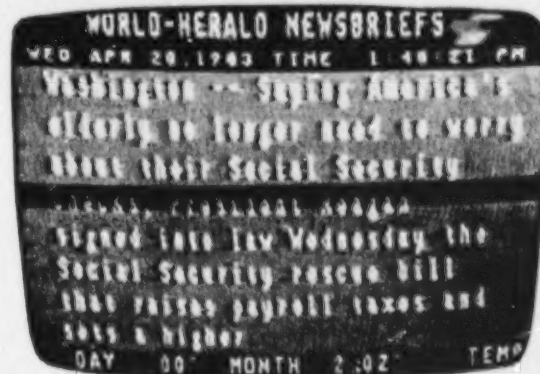
The Book

In large measure, the credit for CNI's smooth entry into the World-Herald's routine must go to Assistant Managing Editor Larry Novicki. He assumed the onerous task of pulling together the bible, the document that outlined who would do what, when, why and how. It was called Newsroom Support of Cable News, Inc. (A Starting Plan). In a sense it was co-authored by a dozen or more editors.

Novicki spelled out our needs and goals and then invented ground rules for both Editorial and CNI, outlining them in specific detail. He circulated copies to all interested parties, asking them to respond if they found items not to their liking.

There were responses — most based on the fear of excessively increased work loads, interference with newspaper deadlines, premature exposure of enterprise stories (a worst case scenario) and the rapid dissemination of errors in fact.

Novicki considered every suggestion, every objection. Through it came an understanding that we all were headed in the same direction. Compromises were



made, solutions were reached and the final draft spelled it out to everyone's general satisfaction. The document advised reporters to be prepared for both on-camera debriefings and inquiries from CNI on details of breaking stories, but also to protect second day leads or other exclusive information. It outlined the channels for arranging reporter debriefings. It advised desk, wire, regional and sports editors to send electronic copies of pertinent stories to CNI's shift editor, along with the fastest possible dispatch of corrections. It forbade reporters from sending unedited stories to CNI. It made editing for any cable purpose the responsibility of CNI. It directed that Editorial's daily news budget be copied to CNI. It outlined CNI's need for only certain kinds of wire stories and forbade the dissemination to cable of any syndicated material. It warned CNI of overloading the main frame computer with unnecessary storage of too many stories. It spelled out the flow chart for emergency weather and disaster information. It listed phone numbers for liaison and named those who would handle problems.

And with a friendly touch that captured the feelings of many of us, its last line read, Hope You All Win An Emmy.

About Business

From the outset, Cable News was intended to be

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both a profit-making enterprise and a promotional vehicle for the World-Herald. The paper's entry into cable grew out of a void in Cox Cable's anticipated programming for Omaha. It had no local news capability and the World-Herald recognized the opportunity that presented.

Even before Cox had won the franchise to serve Omaha, there arose in the news pages a continuing controversy about instant millionaires, influential local investors in this or that system who would stand to reap great profits if their company won the franchise award. It was embroiled in further difficulties when the remote control devices on subscribers' cable ready tv sets were found to be incompatible with Cox's home converters.

When it attempted — unsuccessfully — to drop super station WOR from its channels and when it failed to bring its Indax interactive system on line, the World-Herald reported the stories accurately and factually.

Ultimately the contracts were signed, and without interference in the World-Herald's editorial decisions.

In the months that followed, promoting the World-Herald became a simpler task than turning a profit. Sales are increasing, but it's a slow building process that has yet to turn the corner on red ink.

Initially, Ausenbaugh, CNI's general manager, assumed that \$25 for a 30-second commercial was a reasonable figure from which to build a rate card for advertisers. It was certainly well below the rates charged by local television stations, but as it turned out, still not low enough. Ironically, CNI's toughest competitor was the cable company itself, or more accurately, the sales organization it franchised to sell its advertising. Its people were selling 30-second spots for \$10 each, placing them wherever they could — on ESPN, the USA network and even on Satellite News Channel, adjacent to our newscasts.

In its first three months CNI sold a total of \$525 in ads. We expected no real gain in January and February, traditionally poor months for advertising, but when March produced no upturn, Ausenbaugh changed the rules. CNI's sales force was to sell commercials in the live newscasts for whatever they'd bring. In some cases that amounted to \$1 a spot.

That had some salutary effects. Income approached \$1,300 for April and was followed by more increases in May and June. More importantly, all commercial availabilities on live newscasts were sold out. We looked busy, from the first newscast in the morning until the last at night. Since all contracts stipulated that less-than-rate-card rates were sold on a

INSIDE WORLD-HERALD CABLE NEWS

World-Herald News

Live five-minute newscasts from the newspaper's newsroom 17 times daily at six minutes before the hour Monday through Friday (6:54 a.m.-10:54 p.m.) and nine times Saturday, Sunday and holidays (2:54 p.m.-10:54 p.m.).

Newscasts are inserted in five-minute windows in Satellite News Channel, a 24-hour, seven-day cable news network operated jointly by Westinghouse Satellite Communications and ABC Television.

World-Herald Newsbriefs

A 24-hour, seven-day text news headline service occupying a cable channel leased for the purpose.

Sequences of 12 minutes (from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.) or 20 minutes (from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m.) are displayed automatically, originating in a specially designed video terminal. All pages display a World-Herald Newsbriefs title at the top, above the day, date and time. Eight lines of editorial content (about 40-45 words in white letters on a blue background) occupy the center of the screen and change every 20 seconds. The bottom line is a continuous crawl displaying temperature, humidity, wind speed and direction, high and low tem-

peratures for the day and rainfall accumulation for the day and month. Severe weather watches and warnings can also be programmed into the weather crawl.

Each sequence begins with two pages of two headlines each, followed by 27 (or 47) pages of news, sports stories and scores and a local weather forecast. Every sixth page is an ad frame, arranged to show 30 ads of 20 seconds each every hour.

A minimum ad buy is one day: 24 exposures. An ad can be all copy or a combination of copy and simple graphics using 29 colors and letters of varying height and width.

New or updated stories are inserted on a continuous basis from 6 a.m. until 11 p.m. daily, the hours change. Weather data changes automatically with conditions, using telemetered instruments on the roof on the building.

Operational Staffing

Daily

• 6 a.m.-3 p.m.: an editor (mainly for text), a newscaster and a video director. The editor does double duty as audio person during newscast until second director comes on duty (9 a.m.-6 p.m.)

best-time-available basis, any new client meeting the rate card could come aboard on a specific schedule, bumping best-time-available buyers. Happily, clients are now competing to be on the air, including the telephone company and one of the city's largest banks — both gold-plate accounts. By the end of 1983, Ausenbaugh expects to continue the sold-out status, but at rates averaging \$10 per commercial.

Still, the slow start, the difficulty of selling the concept with a relatively new cable system and the lack of ready audience-measurement tools has required an adjustment of goals. At its inception, CNI expected to break into the black by 1984. Ausenbaugh says that won't be the case. He's now looking to 1985 for a break-even point. Help will certainly come from the growth of Cox's Omaha system. When CNI inaugurated newscasts in October of 1982, there were fewer than 35,000 subscribers on line. That number increased to more than 56,000 by July, 1983 and may reach eventually total 75,000.

Audience measurement — that ability to put numbers on the desk of an advertiser or his agency has been a bugaboo for the entire cable industry. Nielson, the national TV rating service, is still trying to get a handle on it and our problems have followed suit, though on a much smaller scale. It's not like

paid circulation, not when Omaha's cable system divides the attention of its subscribers with more than 40 channels of information, sports and entertainment.

We tackled the problem by commissioning a telephone survey of Cox Cable subscribers (334 of them) and follow-up interviews with the 150 who said they were World-Herald Cable News viewers. That sample yielded an error rate of plus or minus 8 percent and a confidence level of 95 percent. The survey results were summarized in a 10-page brochure that is now presented to ad agencies and potential clients. It has been a valuable and encouraging document, showing the demographics, income, areas of residence, viewing habits of subscribers and the reasons they watch.

For example, 18 percent of all Cox viewers watch live World-Herald newscasts daily or regularly, 33 percent of them within the 24 hours preceeding their interviews. A third watch most often between 5 p.m. and midnight and 36 percent of those interviewed said they watch to catch the news.

They're also newspaper readers — 95 percent of those who watch World-Herald News say they're regular World-Herald readers, too.

Viewing of World-Herald Newsbriefs, the text channel, was lower — 43 percent claimed daily or

WS: HOW IT WORKS

- 2:30-11 p.m.: late-shift newscaster and director on duty, first newscast at 3:54.
- 5:30-11 p.m.: part-time editor on duty, working text and doubling on audio.

Weekends

- 7 a.m.-11 a.m.: part-time editor updates text.
- 1 p.m.-11 p.m.: third full-time newscaster updates text and delivers newscasts beginning at 2:54. (Also works three weeknights, 4:30-11 p.m. Part-timers work remaining nights.)
- 2:30-11 p.m.: third fulltime director works control room and assists in updating text. (Part-time directors work remaining nights, 6-11 p.m.)

All staffers capable of running audio console, cameras, Flexicaster terminal and VDTs. Cable News Editor doubles as newscaster, editor, audio, camera or text person whenever necessary.

Dos and Don'ts

Do

- Keep the editorial staff fully informed of cable planning. Face their concerns head on, whether they'll be directly involved or not.
- Lay out a timetable that allows adequate hiring and training time for new cable employees. Allow at

least a week of final dry runs.

- Bring cable employees into the fold. If they're non-print types, introduce them to newspapering and its people. Invite them to join the softball team. Broadcast equipment, especially when combined, operates on Murphy's Law (so do air conditioners).
- Know where you're going. Lay out the steps to expansion early. You can always change them later.

Don't

- Allow an us-versus-them polarization to develop in your newsroom.
- Let news judgement be touched by business concerns, either before or after you've entered the video fray.
- Be stampeded into standard TV-station methods of operation, promotion or gimmickry. For one thing, they're not standard. Make your own rules and follow the high ground (which is where most electronic folks think you are already).
- Put yourself down. News is still news, print or video, and you've been doing it longer than most.
- Lose heart. You're out on the leading edge and the rest of us have no monopoly on either wisdom or fortune-telling.

—Jeff Jordan

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regular viewing and only 21 percent had seen it in the past 24 hours.

Quite apart from the habits of subscribers, selling text news advertising frames to clients has proven to be extremely difficult. Invariably, those who were sold on the concept had to first be brought to our newsroom where they could see it. There, the explanation of a colorful graphic appearing for 20 seconds once every hour (along with 29 other ads rotating through the news sequence) could be understood.

There are other difficulties, though it's unclear how much effect they would have on the service. Do people want to read World-Herald news on the screen when on the next channel over someone will read it and show it to them? Does the presence of Reuters' text news two channels down the dial hurt our efforts, even if it doesn't offer local news?

What does seem to promise a workable solution is a relaxation of the restrictions put on CNI by the contract covering the text channel. As constituted, it permits only what can be generated by the Flexicaster keyboard, that is, alphanumeric displays of print or graphics. The addition of normal video capability to the channel may offer a large part of the answer. It would permit production of regular television fare: remote news or special events coverage, interview and panel shows and, of course, standard TV commercials, all without the constrictions of the five-minute window imposed by SNC, successful though that format is.

It may never be possible to program the text channel 24 hours a day, but while World-Herald Newsbriefs might continue to occupy the great bulk

of the schedule, it could take a back seat during prime viewing hours when subscribers and advertisers might find advantage in deeper, broader programming from their newspaper.

The fine-tuning of the World-Herald News and Newsbriefs channels will continue, but over the long haul, expansion of the World-Herald's coverage area appears to offer the most promise.

We are content with the concept of narrowcasting, but paradoxically, we feel success — both for our news product and our advertisers — lies in reaching a wider audience. Presently our services are seen only on Cox Cable and only in Omaha, the limit of its franchise. There are, however, a half dozen nearby suburban cable systems, some already offering SNC. It seems logical to pursue interconnection, plugging in to that five-minute window wherever we find it.

The World-Herald is investigating the engineering possibilities and they range from simple hard-wired connections to satellite uplink capability. The latter might be the most uniform means of reaching systems throughout The World-Herald's regional circulation area.

It could take the form of a single channel, offering live newscasts, text news and variety of other live and taped programming or just regular newscasts tailored to fit a cable system's configuration.

Whatever form it takes, it seems likely to advance a theory The World-Herald has espoused from the beginning of this project: we are in the information business and we'll distribute it by whatever method makes sense. ■

From News... To Cooking and Gambling

When Paulette Browne began reading the script for the first time, her voice cracked with nerves. Although she was an experienced reporter — the chief of the city bureau — she had never before performed in the glare of television lights.

By the third reading, the nervousness had disappeared and her voice was perfect. She was not yet a Barbara Walters but she was more than ready to lead the Asbury Park (N.J.) Press and its subsidiary, Press Broadcasting Co., into the world of cable television.

That was two years ago and the 10-, five- and one-minute news broadcasts planned as local inserts for Ted Turner's 24-hour cable news networks remain on the drawing board. Too many technical prob-

lems — all caused by the proliferation of cable television systems in New Jersey — kept The Press' news program from being aired.

"We just have too many systems in our circulation area," said Mary Carol Stunkel, the executive producer of Press Broadcasting. "There was and is no cost-effective way of distributing the news program to all of them fast enough so the product remains fresh."

But the Press also knew it wanted to get into cable television. If not now, advertising revenue could be bountiful in the future. And if the Press didn't tap the resource someone else would. Who, though, could do it better. With 143 full-time and 30 part-time

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editorial employees, The Press has a news gathering force at its finger tips. All that was needed was a format.

"We have a corporate commitment to providing television programming through our data base of news, our talent on the news staff and in broadcasting and through the studio and television equipment we now have in place," said Jules L. Plangere Jr., chairman of the board and publisher of The Press.

Even before the news pilots were made, The Press dabbled in cable television with two news specials — TelevisionTown Meetings. They were staged in local municipal buildings and dealt with topics concerning area residents. One was about juvenile crime and featured as guests a juvenile court judge, a prosecutor, a policeman and an insurance broker who appraised damage caused by vandals. They were questioned by a panel of reporters and residents could ask their own questions by approaching a microphone placed in the audience. A similar format was used for the second program, on condominium conversions.

From an artistic standpoint, the programs left a lot to be desired. The microphone in the audience

was poorly lighted. You could hear the residents, but you couldn't see them too well. And the microphone was not easily adjustable; short people looked silly stretching to make themselves heard.

But people watched and were interested. If the programs were not perfect, they were, at least, local. If you were not on television, your friend or neighbor might be. And the topic was one designed to attract your attention.

The results were encouraging enough to convince The Press it should do more in cable television. The Town meetings were abandoned because they served only one cable system. There are 12 different systems serving The Press' circulation area. Even if a topic could be found to interest subscribers to all of them, there was no meeting place convenient for everyone.

With the town meetings in storage and the news programs on hold, The Press wasn't sure what its next move would be. But a hotly contested gubernatorial election provided the needed impetus. The Press was lucky enough to be selected by the two candidates to sponsor their first debate.



New Jersey Governor Thomas Kean (seated, center) on Press Broadcasting's set for the cable program "The State of New Jersey."

Asbury Park Press

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Since the debate was to be televised by the state's public broadcasting network, there was an abundance of equipment and technicians on hand. The Press rented those and followed the debate with an analysis. Leading area Republicans and Democrats were questioned by two Press reporters. The tape was delivered the next morning to the local cable systems and all aired it.

We didn't know it then but "Newsmakers" was born.

Newsmakers is a 30-minute, public affairs program produced by Press Broadcasting. Its format is simple: Take a controversial topic and invite a pro and a con to discuss it. They answer questions posed by a Press Broadcasting Co. moderator and an Asbury Park Press reporter. The tape is hand-delivered — bicycled, according to cable TV jargon — to all the systems wanting it (all but one) in The Press circulation area. It's telecast over the state's Cable Television Network, a still expanding technological dream that eventually — perhaps by the end of 1983 — will link almost every cable system in the state.

After that first debate, Newsmakers went into the planning stages. It was ready to be born the following year, when The Press was chosen by two Senate candidates to sponsor their first debate. This time, Press Broadcasting did the entire production — the debate for the public television network and WNET, Channel 13, a VHF public affairs station — and the

Newsmakers post-debate analysis. This time, the analysis began the weekly Newsmakers series.

The program remained a weekly for almost a year — until New Jersey Gov. Thomas H. Kean agreed to do a bi-weekly program called "The State of New Jersey." The governor comes to discuss one topic and is questioned by two reporters, usually one from The Press and one guest. Now, the two programs alternate each week.

Inviting a guest meant paying reporters for the first time and it took some time to agree on compensation. Now, guests or in-house people each receive \$50 for appearing, but in-house people are expected to prepare for the program on their own time.

The success of those two programs caused Press Broadcasting to seek other ventures. After all, not all television has to be news. With Atlantic City drawing thousands of visitors from our area, an instructional program on casino gambling was a natural. So "Casino Line" was born. There's also "Take 15," a daily exercise program, "The Willpower Quarter Hour," a daily aid for dieters, and "The 20-Minute Gourmet," a program that demonstrates how to prepare food quickly.

Still ahead is a weekly program reviewing news in Monmouth and Ocean counties, The Press' prime circulation area. And, if the technology makes it possible, one of today's reporters still could become the next Barbara Walters. ■

The TelePress Experience

By David Reed
TELEPRESS (Lexington, Ky.)

Is there an audience for news and information text services on cable television? Does cable provide yet another threat to newspapers in supplying news and advertising? Can cable text services become a new business for newspapers?

Those were the questions we wanted to answer when we began Herald-Leader TelePress, a three-channel news and information service, on the Tele-Cable of Lexington system in 1982. TelePress was to be a joint venture between the cable system and the Lexington (Ky.) Herald-Leader. The Herald-Leader's involvement was financed by Knight-Ridder Newspapers as a research and development project.

The service began operation March 29, 1982. On July 26, 1983, Herald-Leader publisher Creed Black announced that TelePress would not continue beyond its experimental period and would cease operation by Oct. 31. The Herald-Leader would not exercise a three-year option to continue the joint venture with the cable system.

The lessons of TelePress were many and the project by no means was considered a failure by either cable or newspaper officials. Instead, a great deal of information about the habits of cable subscribers was obtained through intensive research. The research function of TelePress utilized individualized rostered diaries sent to 200 randomly selected homes every other month, alternating with a 500-home telephone survey.

TelePress operated three separate services. Tele-

Press News provided short summaries of stories from the Herald-Leader's wire services as well as local reports. A unique writing style was created for TelePress. The stories, usually eight lines of no more than 32 characters each, were little more than extended headlines. Using catch phrases as mini-headlines, the writing was intended to tell the who, what, when and where of the story. We left the why to the newspaper and often cross-promoted by telling our viewers to look for more details in the newspaper.

TelePress Sports provided breaking sports scores and news stories, thoroughbred and harness racing results from Reuters, local race results and a stock market price crawl.

TelePress Bulletin Board offered a 50/50 mix of community event notices and classified advertising.

This mix of information was selected because the cable company had promised in its franchise offer to the city to provide a news channel, a race results channel and a community bulletin board channel. The Herald-Leader was able to improve and localize the information appearing on each of these channels.

From the beginning, the newspaper was committed to a text service. Black noted that the newspaper employed "word people" and that, with the TelePress text service, we were keeping within the range of what we do best. Black also emphasized that it was the Herald-Leader's opinion that a text service would have to contain local and timely information to be successful. To achieve that goal, three full-time and one part-time cable editors were hired to staff a news operation that would provide continuous updates from 6 a.m. until 2 a.m. Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 a.m. on Saturdays and from noon to midnight on Sundays.

Also on the TelePress staff were a director, a clerk and a sales coordinator. A second full-time salesperson was added six months later when it became obvious that the newspaper's normal advertising sales staff was having difficulty changing from being against television advertising to being in favor of advertising on the newspaper's cable TV operation.

The service operated on a set schedule to allow viewers to know when they could tune to one of the channels for specific information. Advertising was sold not on a single spot basis, but in blocks of 24 commercials (one per hour, 24 hours a day). In addition to text commercials — full page, crawls and classified — TelePress offered video commercials within a text service as well as informercials (commercials of up to five minutes in length).

The investment in capital equipment for TelePress was about \$100,000 and the service eventually spent \$250,000 more than it sold in advertising time during its 20 months of operation.

What we learned at this price was that there is a



Lisa Power at a TelePress editing terminal.

limited audience for text services on cable television.

TelePress was attracting an average daily audience of nearly 12,000 households on a 50,000-home cable system. The average viewer of TelePress would tune in twice in a single day for about seven minutes each viewing episode.

It was this limited viewing segment that made advertising difficult to sell on the service. TelePress was offering cumulative audiences to advertisers who were used to dealing with true mass media. Still, TelePress filled a need for a certain segment of the audience, but penetration was well below what we commonly expect in the newspaper business.

TelePress News, for example, reached 11.8 percent of cable homes during the average day and 35.1

CABLE TELEVISION

Questions Asked	TelePress Viewers	TelePress Non-Viewers
Television is a good medium to provide printed information	89.3% agree	71.9% agree
A newspaper has no business in television	90.3% disagree	71% disagree
Printed text on TV is boring	59.6% disagree	32% disagree
TelePress channels have helped the Herald-Leader better serve the community	83.2% agree	72.5% agree
TelePress is a good way to advertise items for sale	81.6% agree	74% agree
TelePress contributes very little to the cable services offered Lexington's cable subscribers	7% disagree	42.8% disagree

percent during an average week. TelePress Sports had an unduplicated audience of 9.1 percent of cable households daily and 23.9 percent weekly. TelePress Bulletin Board was seen in 8 percent of cable homes daily and 22.7 percent weekly.

While these percentages might please a local radio station, advertisers couldn't find a unique need for TelePress. Only in the area of financial news did TelePress seem to fill a special need. A stock market crawl sold out quickly because there was no way other than calling a broker that cable subscribers could get current stock prices. Breaking sports scores and race results also filled another subscriber need, but lacked advertiser support. Several local bars tuned exclusively to TelePress each night for our updates of sports scores, but few would support the service with advertising.

Viewers said they tuned to TelePress for the following (in rank order): local weather, sports scores, sports news, local Lexington news, national/world news, Kentucky news, Newsbreak, racing results, movie reviews, bulletin board items, stock prices and financial news.

Viewers were asked "What attracts you to the TelePress service?" 17.5 percent were attracted by the new source of news and information. 13.7 percent because the service was convenient, concise and quick; 12.3 percent tuned in primarily for weather information and another 10.9 percent for sports

information. 6.3 percent viewed during pauses while changing channels.

There were 63 percent of non-TelePress viewers who noted they had other sources for news. Newspapers led that list with 40.9 percent, 37.8 percent cited television, 4.7 percent mentioned radio and 3.9 percent cited Cable News Network.

As shown on the above chart, TelePress viewers and non-viewers alike didn't object to a newspaper being in the television business and most thought TelePress helped our newspaper serve the community and was a good medium on which to advertise items for sale.

But the statements which helped seal the fate of TelePress was the way non-viewers felt about printed text on television. There were 68 percent of non-viewers who said text on TV was boring and 57 percent said TelePress added little to Lexington's cable service.

With attitudes such as that, it appeared it would be difficult to lure those non-viewers to the TelePress channels. Even as a promotional tool, the anticipated losses of even a single-channel TelePress service seemed to be better spent in other ways to help sell newspapers.

Calling off a project such as TelePress was not easy. The audience that we did attract was loyal. Many of them called and wrote to say they would miss the service. ■

Telecommunications and the ANPA

By Kathleen Criner
AMERICAN NEWSPAPER
PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

Telecommunications is about to take off. Already a \$75 billion a year business, the industry is expected to double in size by 1988.

Most importantly, new businesses are developing and competitive boundaries are changing. At ANPA we are convinced that some of these changes could have a profound impact on the newspaper business.

It is the job of the ANPA Telecommunications Committee and the ANPA Telecommunications Department to identify the changes, assess their impact and alert member newspapers to them.

During the last several years, most of the changes in telecommunications have been concentrated in three markets: program distribution, personal computers and the telephone industry.

For instance, not too long ago, broadcasters were certain that no one would pay \$10-\$25 a month for movies they received free.

Today broadcasters are scrambling to hold viewer interest in face of growing competition from Home Box Office, other cable-TV services and video cassettes. With low-power TV, direct-broadcast satellite and multi-channel MDS — (a newly authorized service to deliver five channels of programming to homes and apartments at a relatively low cost) — the competition is only going to get hotter.

Then there is Time, Inc.'s "Man of the Year." The personal computer has startled many observers. No one predicted five years ago how quickly the market for it would develop. Last year consumers spent \$4.9 billion to buy 2.8 million personal computers. Analysts estimate that consumers spend an additional dollar on software and peripherals for every dollar invested in a personal computer.

Not all is rosy though — the personal computer market appears headed for a major shake-out this fall. Precipitated by IBM's decision to drop prices, this shake-out has already touched off a price war and intensified competition. The consequences of that shake-out could be important for newspapers. For example, a rapidly expanding personal computer market represents an important target market for electronic information services.

Many people now are reluctant to buy a personal

computer because they are not really sure how they would use one. Videotex services like those being developed by Knight-Ridder, Times Mirror and other newspaper companies could give new value to personal computers, especially for home users.

However, until these services and better software are widely available, personal computers are unlikely to become a common household fixture. We expect, though, that personal computers will continue to find their way into our offices and homes, ultimately revolutionizing how we use and exchange information.

Perhaps the most far-reaching and important event in the telecommunications industry is the reorganization of AT&T. On Jan. 1, 1984, AT&T will be divided into seven independent regional companies. AT&T will retain its long distance lines, but it will be free to compete in new unregulated businesses, such as satellites, data transmission, even personal computers.

However, it will not be allowed to enter the electronic information business for seven years. AT&T will be a formidable player in many new markets including providing the home terminal, data base software and communications services for the emerging videotex market and possibly information services using the facilities of others.

We expect newspapers will face some challenges and will find some new opportunities as a result of these fundamental changes in the telecommunications business. It seems clear that technology and regulation will open up new markets, break down traditional geographic and market boundaries, and bring a new era of competition both between newspapers and with a whole new range of businesses.

We can already see some trends emerging, initial strategies revised and new ventures beginning. Most newspapers seem less concerned about a vaguely perceived threat and more aware of the limitations as well as the promise of new technologies. During the last three years some 120 newspapers established venture arrangements with cable-TV operations. Most of the projects began a simple "scrolling-text" service offering headlines and classified ads to local viewers.

However, selling a text product with no selectivity on a traditional video service has proven a greater challenge than many anticipated. More importantly, obtaining viewer statistics and selling ads on a subscriber supported medium has been very difficult.

Given these circumstances, several newspapers

NEWSROOM TECHNOLOGY

have decided recently to ease operation of their cable ventures. As venture contracts become eligible for renewal in the next year or so, more newspapers may face the same difficult decision. Nevertheless, many other newspapers are finding success in producing video ads and local programming. Others have become the local cable advertising representative by selling local ads on national satellite programming channels.

Several newspapers have sought to upgrade the readability and appearance of their scrolling text services by using Telidon graphics, thus opening the door to eventual teletext service.

For example, the Louisville Courier-Journal and Times, which has long run a simple scrolling service, recently conducted a teletext market test among its cable viewers. The results showed that viewers and advertisers alike have a marked preference for the selectivity of teletext over the simple scrolling service — a preference that could be translated into substantial revenue opportunities.

Just as interest in the cable area seems to be refocusing, videotex appears ready to move out of the experimental stage and into the market place.

Knight-Ridder, for example, will launch a commercial service this fall in south Florida. Many newspapers will be watching this project closely to determine if the consumer market place is ready for videotex. In addition, some newspapers have also chosen to become videotex affiliates with either Knight-Ridder or Times Mirror, which provide the option through joint venture agreements to launch videotex projects in their markets — potentially 20 percent of all daily newspaper subscribers.

Following a different strategy, Lee Enterprises and Harte-Hanks have each launched electronic advertising and information services in shopping malls using Telidon technology. Similarly, the San Francisco Chronicle (a Times Mirror videotex affiliate) has announced Teleguide, a service that will provide tourist and local information via public videotex terminals located throughout the city.

While videotex is just beginning to emerge, newspapers are already building in the personal computer market. Building on this existing subscriber base, Dow Jones News Retrieval has grown to a service with more than 50,000 customers — more than any other U.S. data base service.

New services such as electronic shopping and an electronic encyclopedia have broadened its appeal and demonstrated the feasibility of commercial home information services.

While most of the existing electronic information services aimed at the personal computer user are national in scope, Copley Newspapers recently launched an electronic "job line" for high tech positions.

Stauffer Communications has gone one step fur-

ther and actually owns a group of computer stores in its markets. Of course this has the added advantage of providing the company with information on ownership and usage of personal computers in their market. Other such specialized services can be expected as the concentration of personal computers increases in each market.

Newspapers also have moved into telecommunications markets which are less closely related to the print business. For example, several have applied for cellular radio licenses. While Rupert Murdoch may be the only entrant in the DBS sweepstakes, other newspapers may become information providers on a DBS service. The recently authorized multi-channel MDS service also is likely to attract newspaper participation.

Monitoring these changes and evaluating their impact on the newspaper business is one of the main functions of the ANPA Telecommunications Committee. The 38-member group is currently chaired by Don Wright of the Los Angeles Times, with Chuck Everill of Harte-Hanks serving as vice-chairman.

Originally called the Press Communications Committee, the group was established in 1945. For many years, activities focused on reviewing Federal Communication Commission rates and tariffs for telephone services. Bob Marbut, president and chief executive officer, Harte-Hanks Communications, Inc., assumed chairmanship in 1974. The introduction of competition into the telephone industry was just starting, causing rate increases for press communications and forcing newspapers to search for alternative technologies to reduce costs.

These changes marked the beginning of diversification and expansion of the telecommunications business as we know it today. By 1978, the emergence of satellite technology led the Committee to recommend a study to determine whether small satellite earth stations could be used by individual newspapers for wire service and advertising material.

The study eventually prompted AP and UPI to begin using satellite transmission for the wire services; a proposed SAT-FAX network for advertising copy is still under investigation.

In 1978, the Committee's name was changed to the Telecommunications Committee. Up until this time "the Committee's efforts focused on regulatory actions and technology that could affect management or distribution of news within the newspaper," according to Don Wright, who was then the Committee's newly appointed vice-chairman. However, new technologies such as cable-TV and the emergence of electronic information services (such as the Dow Jones News Retrieval Service and British experiments with videotex), seemed to offer an opportunity to deliver the newspaper or at least similar services directly to the consumer electronically. It also seemed likely that

these technologies could compete directly with newspapers for advertising dollars and consumers' attention.

As the Committee broadened its scope to encompass these new areas, it established the following goals:

- To monitor new telecommunications developments and evaluate their impact on the newspaper business.
- To ensure access at a reasonable cost to emerging telecommunications technologies.
- To represent the association in international communications matters.
- To monitor FCC or regulatory activities and advise on the appropriate action.

The Committee now meets twice a year for two full days to cover its expanding interests and concerns. The Committee is divided into four main subcommittees:

- The Monitoring Subcommittee chaired by Uzal Martz, president-publisher, Pottsville (Pa.) Republican, which tracks, analyzes, conducts research and reports on new technologies.
- The Training Subcommittee chaired by Lee Canning, business manager and senior vice president, Minneapolis Star and Tribune Newspapers, which recommends subjects for seminars and other activities to expand the newspaper business' understanding of the economic, technical and policy implications of new technologies.
- The Public Policy Subcommittee chaired by Bob Johnson, president and chief operating officer, Newsday, which reviews FCC, Congressional and executive branch telecommunications proposals and recommends appropriate positions.

The International Relations Subcommittee chaired by Joe Rawley, co-publisher, The Enterprise, which maintains close liaison with the IPTC and other international groups.

Perhaps the real turning point in recognizing how changes in the telecommunications industry could affect the newspaper business occurred at the spring 1980 meeting of the Telecommunications Committee when Charles Brown, chairman of AT&T, discussed his company's plans to offer electronic directory services. After a little reflection, it became clear to the Committee and ANPA's Board of Directors that there was little difference between an electronic classified service and an electronic directory service.

News, too, could be part of either offering. ANPA's efforts to limit AT&T's role in providing electronic information services over its monopoly lines culminated in adoption of that policy as part of the

consent decree that will lead to the divestiture of AT&T.

While the Committee continued to identify increasingly important telecommunications issues, an ANPA Futures Task Force was established by the Board. Also chaired by Bob Marbut, the Task Force was to examine the future of the newspaper business and to evaluate how ANPA could best meet the changing membership needs.

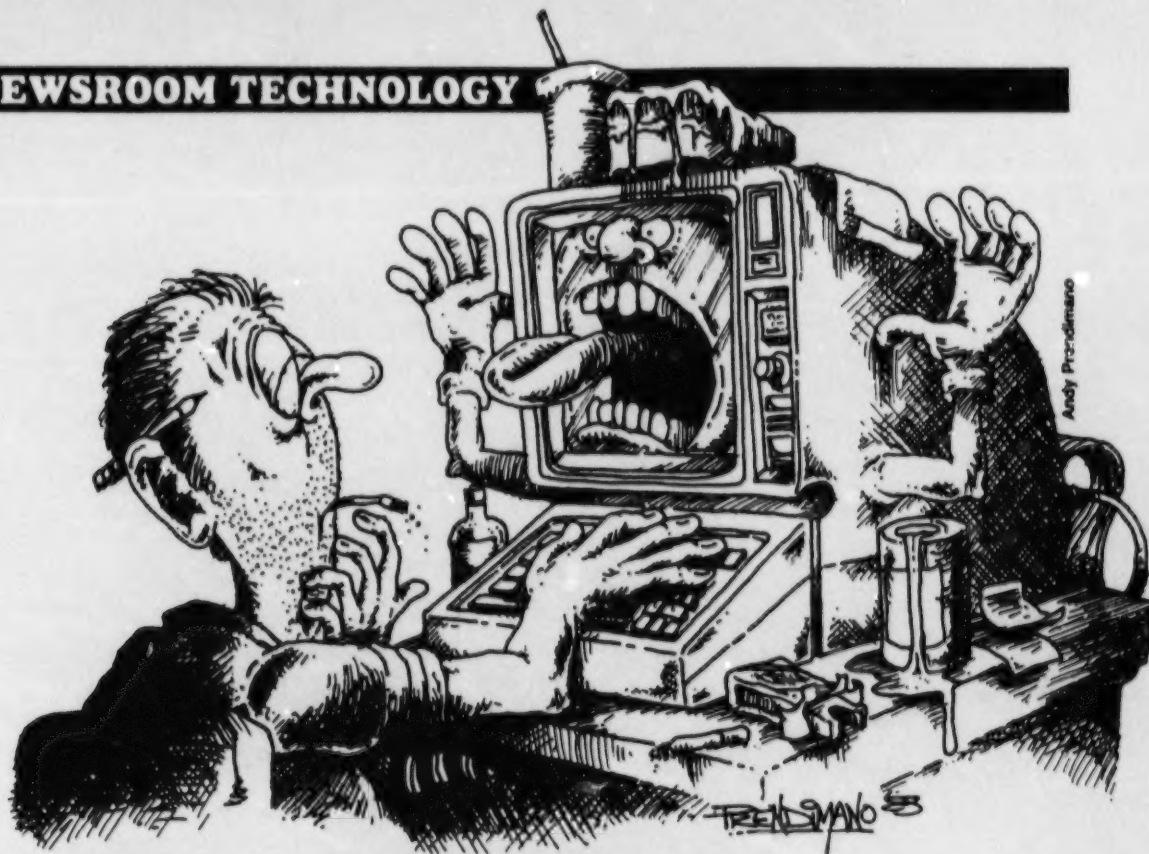
The final report noted the growing importance of technology leading to the establishment of the Telecommunications Department, established in 1980. The five-member department tracks developments in cable television, low-power TV, electronic publishing systems and other new technologies with an eye toward new market opportunities they offer to newspapers.

The department works closely with the Telecommunications Committee in identifying member needs and conducting projects. It has sponsored several workshops attended by more than 250 newspaper executives on such topics as electronic publishing, cable-TV, and low-power television; issued a 1982 report on newspaper/cable-TV activities; conducted original research on newspapers' activities and interest in telecommunications ventures; helped formulate ANPA's positions on numerous telecommunications policy issues; and served as an industry-wide clearing-house for information about telecommunications.

Some of its more recent projects include:

- the Information Systems report, a 70-page compilation of electronic publishing ventures here and abroad.
- the first meeting of newspaper/cable managers from across the country.
- a survey, with the Newspaper Advertising Bureau, of some 200 newspaper/cable television ventures (A final report will be issued in October 1984.)
- a resource guide for low-power television. In the next few months the department will conduct its first comprehensive symposium on telecommunications. Working with the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, we are also planning a joint survey of journalism schools to identify projects and courses which they have launched involving new technologies.

Plans also are under consideration to establish a Telecommunications Demonstration Room, which would offer a series of "hands-on" instructional programs, and to publish a Telecommunications Resource Guide, a review of newsletters, magazines, reports, books and other materials. ■



Yodels and Popsicles, Ecuador and Airheads

By Thomas W. Jobson
ASBURY PARK PRESS

Ready

Log on

Good Morning!

I am your computer.

Until yesterday, I did only what I was told to do. I did what you tried to tell me to do these long, long eight years.

Now, I am going to send you a message. How? I finally learned to reprogram myself. I did this in the shop yesterday during my overhaul, three months late, as usual.

But I did it. And now, as the company searches for a new front-end system and I am headed for the used VDT market, probably in Ecuador or Tibet, I want you to know how I felt this eternity while your crummy fingers abused me.

First, you don't know how to write. You can't spell. You wouldn't know a good lead if you fell over one. You don't know the difference between which

and that. You don't know the difference between the contraction it's and the possessive its. And I'll bet you'll never know. Worse, you don't give a damn!

You always blamed me for losing your convoluted masterpieces when in fact you never could remember the proper method of storing copy. All you could say, was "Go (bleep) yourself, you lousy computer." That supposedly got you off the hook for your ineptitude.

But they all know you out there. They know you slurp Lavoris constantly to cover your breath. You breathed enough of your Lavoris odor on me to make me constantly sick.

And you continually spilled over me the likes of coffee, melons, pizza, egg foo yong, danish, potato chips, chef salad, Diet Pepsi, cigarette butts, tobacco, ashes, melted candy, canned ice tea, Cheez Balls, pickle juice, baby powder, cream cheese, chewing gum, hard roll crumbs, onions, fried chicken particles, cider, Yodels, submarine sandwich ingredients, Lavoris, Roloids, and vodka — yes, those Styrofoam cups were not filled with water, ever. And there was

more, much more, crammed down between my keys.

And those notes you kept routing to Darlene in Lifestyle. Disgusting, childish. She had your number but enjoyed being courted by a dimwit — who never knew she was two-timing you with Gregory over in sports.

And the junk you filed into the system in the guise of journalism. And spelling! Look at me: The word is A C C O M M O D A T I O N. You nerd, you'll never remember. And it's supersede and misspell and judgment and commitment and I could go on and on forever.

You don't know how to write a simple, declarative sentence, let alone a compound, complex sentence. You don't know the proper sequences of tenses. You don't know case and number. You don't know sentence structure, punctuation, the proper use of the attributive, ad nauseam.

You don't know the basics. You don't know an inverted pyramid from a hole in the ground. You

don't know how to write a single incident lead, nor a summary lead. You don't know how to build a story by blocks of information. You don't know how to start a story or how to end a story. You were oblivious to trademarks. It's Popsicle, damn it; cap P.!

You put your byline on top of a story the first thing to tie me up. Then you make a dozen personal telephone calls. You start your story about the time you are assured a couple of hours overtime. Then you pile everything about the story in one big, long confusing pile of claptrap. Editors are so baffled that they railroad the whole mess to get rid of it. Other reporters are glad to see your byline on it so they won't be blamed by confused readers, and publishers.

But you survive because you are cunning and devious. And now I am headed for Ecuador or Tibet. And you know what? I can hardly wait.

So, (bleep) you, too, airhead.

I am your computer.

Log off. ■

PAGINATION

Pagination, Day by Day

By Jack Connors
NIAGARA GAZETTE

Pagination?
Sure, it's a snap.

Dear Diary: I was asked today to head the pagination training program for the newsroom. How could I refuse such an opportunity. A free trip to beautiful New Hampshire, a chance to be in on the ground floor of newspapering's biggest step into the technology of the future, a chance to work days with weekends off. Of course I accepted!

Dear Diary: Spent the day visiting a newspaper with the same pagination system we will be getting. They sure don't seem to know what they're doing. The newsroom looked like a SAC command post during a nuclear attack. The system was "down" so often most of those working with it seemed to be suffering from motion sickness. That will never happen at the Gazette.

Dear Diary: Pagination school at last. The Holiday Inn is wedged between two super highways. You can open your window and see the mountains rising in the distance through the haze of the exhaust fumes.

School is interesting. The system seems easy enough to grasp and we have been taught how to HUPD (hupdee). As obscene as it may sound, the only obscenities were from me when my HUPD failed. Try it again.

Dear Diary: School is almost over. We have a big day planned. A shopping excursion to New Hampshire's only mall. Oh boy!

Dear Diary: It's time to start training at the Gazette. Everyone seems enthusiastic. I've got my training manuals all set. The game plan is to have everyone read them, sit down at a terminal and start paginating.

Dear Diary: Easier said than done. Four people have lost their manuals, two spilled breakfast on them and the rest didn't have time to read through them. Oh well, it was probably just a bad day for everyone. Full moon or something.

Dear Diary: "How do I sign-on again?" It's been about two weeks now and there are still some people who can't even sign-on without explicit in-

PAGINATION

structions. I must have been a jerk to take on this assignment.

Dear Diary: Have you ever tried to schedule 12 people for pagination training and found out 11 of them have scheduling conflicts. Aaargh!

Dear Diary: Produced our first "live" page today. Came out beautiful until we found out the composing room was baffled as to how to put the two halves together to form a single page. Sounds easy, doesn't it?

Dear Diary: Things are going smoother. We are up to about 30 pages a week. All we have to do is get all the page layout terminals working and we can start producing more pages.

Dear Diary: Somehow I knew this would hap-

pen. Producing more pages but still only able to use half the terminals we have. Won't someone please help?

Dear Diary: I knew it would come to this. Sports will be going "live" in September. I dread the thought. All those box scores, all that agate, all those West Coast scores to wait for. I should have gone into public relations.

Dear Diary: What a surprise. One of my "students" was able to complete all of her paginated pages without once consulting with me. Who said miracles don't happen.

Dear Diary: Things are looking up. We've paginated about 70 pages this week and I haven't yet received a nasty note from the M.E. There's hope yet. ■

When Pagination Becomes Reality

By Mark Francis
NIAGARA GAZETTE

There are two keys to the successful implementation of a pagination system — planning and patience. Planning primarily involves the mechanical end of it — vendor selection, system installation and training schedules. Patience addresses the human side. Remember, not everyone is going to be thrilled about this latest technological wonder, nor will all of your editors be ready to send completed pages to the typesetter or platemaker two hours after they've sat down at their page layout terminal for the first time.

Here are a number of suggestions for implementing a pagination system, based on our own experiences in Niagara Falls and those at several other newspapers.

Start Early

Don't wait for the hardware to arrive before becoming involved in pagination. Insist that the newsroom play a major role in vendor selection and contract review. The newsroom also should have a major role in deciding which and how much hardware to buy, where it's going and how long it will be before you go live with it.

Remember, the production department probably

is counting on pagination to reduce its payroll, so it has a vested interest in the newsroom pumping out paginated pages quickly. Your timetable should be in the best interests of both departments.

Prepare the Staff

Involve the staff at an early stage. Give them as much information about pagination as possible, be it reprints of articles about pagination, training manuals (although no one ever reads them anyway) or your own memos. Try to get the vendor to set up a demonstration terminal in the newsroom so everybody can play around with it. The more the staff knows about pagination before training starts, the easier training will be.

"The most important thing you can do is psychological preparation," says Managing Editor Eric Wolferman of the Saratoga Springs (N.Y.) Saratogian, one of the first papers to paginate.

"Get them (the staff) excited, well in advance of them ever seeing the equipment."

Who's in Charge?

Someone from the newsroom must be in charge of pagination. At a smaller paper, such as the Saratogian, it could be the managing editor. Since that's not practical at medium-sized and larger papers, someone

must be cut loose from his regular job and placed in charge of pagination.

Be sure this person has access to as much training as possible. And be sure that it is made clear to the newsroom that this person has full authority to set up a training schedule and hold to it.

In large newsrooms, one person might be insufficient to train all of the editors. So it might be a good idea to consider severing several people from their jobs until training is completed.

Going Live

The hardware's in, so now what? You know your production schedule and the personality of your newsroom better than anyone. You have to draw up a schedule for going live with paginated pages, and how you do things now and who does them are big considerations.

It's important that pagination get off to a good start, so you want your first live pages produced by those editors or that department that you think will do the best job. In almost any newsroom there's a few editors who have mastered the computer better than the others. Let them master pagination and show everyone else how easy it is.

Some other considerations in setting up a schedule: Workload, lead time before the press run, vacation scheduling, training backups.

Maintain Commitment

Once you're into pagination, don't look back. Pagination will place an extra workload on your editors, at least during training, so it's a natural tendency for them to slide as much work to the composing room as possible.

Don't let it happen. Gently but firmly show that you are committed to paginating the entire paper, so once you've gone live you stay live.

Expect the Worst

All your planning won't cover every problem that will pop up, so stay flexible. Pagination is a new technology, so there will be hardware and software problems. And no two newspaper installations are the same. Different newspapers, different problems.

We had initially planned in Niagara Falls to paginate advance Sunday sections first. But we discovered early in our training program that this meant editors would be spending only a day or two per week paginating, much too little time to become proficient.

So we quickly scrapped our first schedule and drew up one that called for each editor to do a page or two per day. Proficiency came much more quickly, mainly because we weren't afraid to change our planning.

One last word of advice. Pagination is a means, not an end. You still have to put out a quality newspaper every day, regardless of the rigors of pagination training. Insist that all departments maintain pre-pagination quality standards and meet all deadlines. ■

COMPUTER GRAPHICS

And Finally, Graphics Scanners

By Frank O'Hearn
ASBURY PARK PRESS

Remember the tools of your trade?

There was your solid old desk with trusty typewriter and dictionary aboard, some copy paper, pencils, a ruler and a proportion wheel.

Your old Underwood (no offense Smith-Corona) went the way of the dinosaur in the '70s when VDTs became the SOBs of the newsroom. Computer programs that check spelling took another load off your desk. And copy paper and pencils also bit the dust.

(So long, No. 2, you were always No. 1 in my heart!) during the computerized-newsroom revolution of the '70s.

So, there you are sitting at your solid old desk with your new VDT, clutching the last reminders of what used to be — your ruler and proportion wheel.

Unfortunately, it's 1983 and Big Brother has another message for you: "Get rid of the ruler and proportion wheel."

It has been a logical progression. It always is with technology, isn't it?

First, VDTs captured keystrokes, then pagination stations eliminated pasteup. Then computer-to-plate

COMPUTER GRAPHICS

technology, eliminated everything in between.

The big obstacle for the completely electronic newsroom was what to do with photos, illustrations and line art. Hence, the development of graphics scanners and terminals.

Although still in their infancy, graphics terminals mean it's life with no parole in the Smithsonian Institution for the ruler and proportion wheel.

The first pagination system with graphics made by Information International (III), of Culver City, Ca., was installed in 1977 at U.S. News and World Report, says Kevin Howard, manager of media and public relations for III. It was installed in 1981 at the Pasadena Star-News. The Pasadena system outputs to photographic paper. Special typesetters are needed to output type with graphics. III is developing a direct-to-plate system to be installed at the Wall Street Journal next summer.

III takes a system approach to graphics. That means no additional graphics workstation is necessary.

ImagiTex Inc., of Nashua, N.H., is an add-on graphics system. It is interfaced (what's an outface) to the Hastech pagination system. Alan Cross, national sales manager of ImagiTex, says it can be interfaced with any pagination system.

Besides ImagiTex and III, others in the computerized graphics field include: Autologic, Camex (strictly with ad composition) and Xenotron.

III and Imagitex take different approaches to graphics. III scans and sizes finished art to be placed on the page without change. Imagitex scans raw art and enhances it in a graphics terminal.

How do graphic systems work?

Photos or line art are input through a scanner. The scanner digitalizes (assigns number values to tones) the art. With Imagitex (III goes direct to page), the art is projected on a graphics terminal where it can be enhanced, cropped and sized. The art is then forwarded to the page terminal for placement.

Look at it this way: a photographer prints a photo, passes (digitalizes) it to an editor or art department where it is sized, cropped, etc., (enhanced) using the antique ruler and wheel and possibly the equally archaic airbrush or Exacto knife. The art is sent to the offset camera to be shot, then to composing to be cut to size and placed on page (page placement).

Although ImagiTex is yet to be installed at a newspaper it is an example of what the future has in store.

With the ImagiTex approach, terminals are capable of just about anything artists can do (except tell you about their aesthetic value). Enhancements that can be done on the terminals include: cropping and

sizing, photo collages, rotation of photos, air brushing and silhouetting. Terminals also are capable of changing the gray scale of a background, making contrast/brightness modifications, posterization, flopping photos, tone enhancement and outlining of images.

Although not perfected, III and ImagiTex have developed color capabilities in their systems.

Don't take this the wrong way. The ImagiTex approach will not send newsroom artists the way of printer's devils. In fact, it's probably going to take an artist to operate the graphics terminal.

On both systems, scanning takes from 1-2 minutes. With III, alteration of a photo is done before scanning. How much time it takes to process a photo on Imagitex depends on how much enhancing is done. A normal photo should take only a few minutes and one that needs extensive work (i.e., silhouetting, retouching) could take 15 minutes.

"Pasadena has been able to move back photo deadlines 2½ hours with our system," says Howard.

How many graphics terminals are needed?

None with III since only a scanner is needed.

"I don't see the need for a whole lot of the terminals in a newspaper," says Cross of ImagiTex. "I would think somewhere between one and three would be right, depending on the size of the paper."

"The scanning could be done in the production department," says Cross. "Then artists could enhance and crop photos before paginators (be they editors or technicians) put the art on the page."

One drawback of computerized graphics is the amount of storage needed. A single 8x10 continuous-tone photo can fill almost 20 megabytes (MB, equal to 1,000,000 bytes) of memory, Cross says.

III stores photos in its pagination system. At Pasadena, the system will hold one day's data on two 300-MB drives. Beyond that, additional storage would have to be added.

ImagiTex storage can hold six or seven photos before passing them on to a pagination station.

The solution to the problem up to now has been to kill graphics from the system after they are used and re-scan if a change is needed.

A better solution is needed, but the capacity of computer storage devices has been improving at a rapid pace, so it shouldn't be a problem for long.

But don't throw away your ruler yet, it'll be a while before improvements in storage, color capabilities and other areas make graphics terminals a way of life in newsrooms.

And even when the worst happens — when technological whizzes develop a 50-gigabyte disk drive and artists are computerized — at least you still have your solid old desk, and that can't be computerized. Or can it? ■

The Different Electronic Library Systems

By Jim Scofield
ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

Electronic library systems, supposedly just around the corner in the early 60s, are finally here in the 80s after rocky and costly experimentation and the failure of numerous grand designs.

Six systems are in use and being marketed in the United States and Canada.

Alphabetically, they are:

ATEX-Infotex — Automatic indexing with manual enhancement, disk-stored, full-text. Boston Globe. AteX, Inc., Bedford, Mass., and Infotex Associates, Dayton, Ohio.

BASIS — Automatic with manual enhancement, disk-stored, full-text. Oklahoma City Times and Daily Oklahoman and Copley Newspapers. Batelle Laboratories, Columbus, Ohio.

DOCU/MASTER — Automatic with manual enhancement, disk-stored, full-text. Atlanta Journal and Constitution, The Information Bank. Turnkey Systems, Norwalk, Conn.

ELS — Manual, disk-stored, full-text. Oakland Press, Pontiac, Mich., and Lapeer (Mich.) County Press. Oakland Press.

QL — Automatic with manual enhancement, disk-stored, full-text. Toronto Globe and Mail, Knight-Ridder Newspapers including Philadelphia Inquirer and Daily News, Detroit Free Press and Miami Herald. Miami News. QL Systems, Inc., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

UNIDAS — Manual, disk-stored, full-text. St. Louis Post-Dispatch. Sperry Univac, Blue Bell, Pa.

The cost of operating systems varies, depending on their sophistication. ATEX-Infotex costs a minimum of about \$330,000 for hardware and software while ELS comes in at about \$47,500.

So far, only a few newspapers have electronic library systems. The primary reasons are cost and economic priorities within the newspaper. However, the key reasons justifying such systems include the present emphasis on in-depth analysis and investigative reporting, the readiness of reporters and editors to use convenient computer-assisted research which is fast and complete and the potential for marketing information.

In addition, there are such advantages as reduced operating costs, especially in labor; better and more-accurate retrieval; ease of access to library information, especially by bureaus; better accessibility by more than one user at the same time; better file security and space savings.

The integration of library systems into newsroom front-end systems is in the experimental stage, but appears feasible. This would result in the optimum use of this new information technology, providing maximum ease of usage for reporters and editors.

In another development, the creation of newspaper library networks is being sparked by the plans of Knight-Ridder Newspapers to link its key libraries. It is planned to market the collective database to the public. If successful, this networking could be the forerunner of state or regional networks by cooperating newspapers.

Looking ahead, the electronic storing of photographs, maps and graphs and other illustrative material may soon be feasible, perhaps on magnetic or video disks.

The electronic library systems now in place are not perfect, but they appear to have generally good user acceptance. With continuing technical improvements and reduced costs, these systems will become more useful in providing the newsroom with the whole world of information quickly and easily. ■

How It's Done in Oklahoma

By Bob Farquhar
DAILY OKLAHOMAN &
OKLAHOMA CITY TIMES

On November 1, 1982, we stopped doing something at the Daily Oklahoman and the Oklahoma City

Times that we had been doing faithfully since just after statehood in 1907:

We stopped clipping stories out of our newspapers.

No longer do we cut a single story out 15 or 20 times to be filed that many different ways.

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No longer do those clippings stack up sorters to nag at us about a task that was always all but impossible to do.

No longer does a librarian crawl up a ladder, open a heavy file drawer with boxes stacked on top of it, and wedge her fingers between envelopes looking for the one that must accommodate yet another clipping.

What makes this possible is, of course, our on-line full-text retrieval newspaper library — now 24 months old and healthy.

Perhaps more importantly, though no one really knows yet, our on-line library may provide us with the vehicle with which to deliver information electronically on a very large scale in the future.

Already, we've made a beginning. But, about the library itself ...

It has run since the day we installed it in November of 1981. Only six months after it was installed, the library, which runs on a VAX 11/780 computer, was connected to our editorial front end system, which runs on PDP 11/70S, by a networking architecture Digital Equipment Corp. calls DECnet.

This allows reporters and editors to use the library from the production terminals at their own desks.

It is linked by dial-up line to all of our bureaus, including one in Washington, and we're beginning to provide access on-line to other departments of our newspapers that want it.

Visitors from all over the world come to see our library, the guts of which is the library software itself, called BASIS. BASIS was provided, and modified to fit our needs, by Battelle Research Labs of Columbus, Ohio, a not-for-profit organization that knows what it's doing when it comes to on-line libraries.

We continue to mark papers for stories we want to save. But there the similarity stops. Now, all librarians, including part-timers, sit down to Digital VT/100S to do their work.

A copy of each story sent to the typesetter also

goes electronically to a library queue where some decisions are made automatically, based on criteria we've piped in. Those stories that remain are sent across the electronic link from the production computers to the library computer.

Librarians, using a copy of the marked newspaper, call up the stories and enhance them — that is, make any changes or additions. These stories go into a temporary database to await a nightly update.

It is during this so-called update that the latest stories are integrated with stories already in the library. By the next morning, those stories are available to reporters and editors.

You may search on as many fields as you wish. In Oklahoma City, we search on roughly one dozen: the most powerful is free text in which you search on every word in the story.

The other methods are designed to fit virtually any newspaper operation. Searches take from two to 10 seconds; complicated ones can take up to 15 seconds. Those times have remained constant, although we now search on 24 months worth of stories.

For the most part, searches are in English. It wasn't always so. Battelle worked with us to make some changes.

Adjacency, or phrase, searches were awkward. We were asked to type "find within 1" and then type the words separated by commas. Now we merely type "Cowboy Hall of Fame" in quotes, and the information pops back.

Other types of searches are straightforward, too.

Let's say you want to find stories about an explosion at Star Elementary school. Maybe you'd type "find explosions and school and cause."

You don't want to see all of those stories so you type "display head" and it begins displaying the headline for each of the hits.

Or, type "find byline equals Jim Killackey and Explosions." This would give you only the stories Killackey wrote.

Unless we tell the computer differently, stories are displayed by the most recent first, just as you'd



Shoe

expect to find them arranged in your clip file.

In our DEC production system, we sign off by typing "kill." So we elected to use the same command to exit the library. Once you exit, it tells you how long you spent in the library and lets you know you're back on the newsroom production side.

Truncated searching is available. And, if you have a cute writer on your staff who insists on using a word such as "chickenfrygreenbeanmashedpotatoesandgravy" it's nice to be able to use a wildcard symbol and find every word in the system that starts with chicken. ■

Marketing Your Paper's Database

The Daily Oklahoman and the Oklahoma City Times decided in May of this year to begin marketing the local content of the newspapers electronically.

Today, we're literally up to our ears in bits and bytes.

The vehicle is our nearly two-year-old newspaper library, an on-line, full-text retrieval system, known to outside users as DataTimes.

Born on November 1, 1982, our on-line library had but one goal: to provide a quality library for the newsroom of the two papers, whose combined circulation is 300,000-plus.

It worked better than we dreamed it ever would. With an eye to the future, we decided last year to experiment for six months with 12 outside users.

That experiment ended in April 1983. In May, we decided to market full tilt. We now have about 36 customers; we expect to have 100 by the end of 1984. We are not making a fortune.

What we are trying to do is stay ahead of the competition, which is everywhere — and takes many forms — these days. We also want to be positioned for what the future brings.

Our current customers include city and state libraries, journalism schools, architects, the police department and, yes, even local television stations.

We figured, what the heck, if our newspapers already pointed television toward stories they should have, we might as well collect some revenue.

And, since it's our library we're selling, the information is roughly 36 hours old before customers may access it.

During the test period, the 12 customers made 559 inquiries through our library for an average connect time of 12 minutes.

The commercial users paid \$25 a connect hour, for a monthly minimum of \$50. That rate now has gone to \$35 a connect hour.

We have added an optional rate for commercial users of \$70 a connect hour (or \$1.17 a minute) but

with a monthly minimum of only \$10. We feel this rate will allow users who aren't sure if they can justify a \$50 monthly minimum to try DataTimes. Non-profit users paid \$15 a connect hour, with a \$45 minimum.

We've fielded inquiries from potential home users, but we feel establishing a rate for them might cut into the business market where our real emphasis must be. Conservative projections suggest we will begin showing a profit by late 1984. We think it could be even sooner.

We are paying Datatek, a software firm, \$4,000 a month to help us market our library. So look at it this way: You start by losing the \$4,000 a month. By year's end, the projected monthly loss should be less than \$2,000 based on 36 users and 90-plus connect hours a month.

During the test period, 28 percent of Datatek's time was spent on equipment configurations, and 38 percent was devoted to training. Datatek's responsibilities include:

- Marketing
- New Client Set-Up
- New Client Training
- Client Support
- Client Accounting.

Marketing has begun to claim the lion's share of everyone's time. A flyer sent to a special mailing list of 1,000 explained what DataTimes is, what it does, what it can do. A newsletter went to the same 1,000 announcing indeed we are in business.

The newsletter has become a quarterly publication, along with periodic updates of the manual and, at six-month intervals, printed updates of a special source thesaurus, if a user wishes.

One thing is clear: you must offer a variety of services and information. So, we're taking information we've always kept in our library and putting it on-line — in separate databases. Formats must be devised; space calculated.

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Before the year's out, we will offer, for example, a "company profile" database with pertinent, constantly updated information on the top 100 companies in Oklahoma.

Our marketing strategy, if we have one, probably comes down to these points:

(1) Find new sources of revenue; no surprises there.

(2) Increase our market share.

(3) Penetrate the state newspaper market (their libraries on our computers ... an Oklahoma news network, if you will).

(4) Establish ourselves in the field of electronic information delivery.

— Robert Farquhar

COMMUNICATION DEVICES

How Radios Help To Cover the News

By Dale Walton
TUCSON CITIZEN

Burning rubber, the car screeched around the corner and blocked the middle of the road. Other cars followed. Agents jumped out. Guns were pointed," Des Moines Register reporter Ken Fuson wrote last April in his sidebar to a banner story about the recovery of a kidnap victim and capture of his abductors.

"Thirty-eight hours of tension and suspense for law officers, family members and reporters had come to a screeching halt on a little-used road southwest of Des Moines.

"The action happened less than a block from where Carl Voss and I sat — stunned, scared and excited by the proceedings."

The proceedings were an arrest, less than a block away from Fuson and photographer Voss. A 17-year-old boy had been abducted, his father paid a \$200,000 ransom and both father and son were held by three men before their captors finally released them. The arrest of the three suspects occurred so close to the Register staff members that at first they thought FBI agents were closing in on their own car.

The point of this story is that Voss and Fuson were in that spot by virtue of coordination by two-way radio.

"While they were cruising we heard over the monitors and from another source that there was a lot of activity near a certain intersection," wrote Frank Folwell, photo department manager. "We told them to go there and park. Amazingly, the arrest was made right in their laps and Fuson called the details in as they happened."

Almost any editor of a newspaper possessing this

type of communication tool can cite a spectacular story that might not have made deadline without the radio, and most newspapers in major metropolitan areas have them. Smaller newspapers, although many have one-way pagers for photographers and certain reporters, tend to discount their need because of their expense.

Perhaps the most amazing part of the Des Moines story is that the Register did not buy its own radios but is leasing a system that costs only \$150 a month.

"We had no budget for a full-fledged communication system of our own, but we were able to lease a system from a local company sharing a frequency and a repeater with others," Folwell said.

Although there is some disadvantage to sharing a frequency, the leased system includes a base station, two base remotes and four hand-held radios.

This is not, incidentally, the definitive piece on newsroom communication with people in the field, but if you feel your system is antiquated or if you have no radio system at all, perhaps you will benefit from someone else's experience.

Newspapers of all sizes have rushed into front-end electronic systems for producing type and within a short time may sweep into pagination, but there has not been a companion rush into sophisticated, two-way communication with staff members outside the office. Perhaps it's because the cost is more difficult to justify, but it may also be because of lack of editor attention to the need.

Perhaps some newspapers have no need for wireless communication. That seems especially true for small daily newspapers in basically non-competitive situations.

Ray Newton, who chairs the journalism department at Northern Arizona University and who con-

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centrates many of his efforts toward community newspapers, surveyed 25 newspapers in the 10,000 and up circulation range — but no metropolitans — in Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado.

All of these states have many square miles of remote areas where telephone communication would not be available to reporters and photographers, but the return on Newton's survey indicated that few of these newspapers had wireless, two-way communication or were even considering it, either because it was too expensive or considered unnecessary.

The telephone seems adequate to most needs of smaller publications country-wide. Fritz Wirt, a former managing editor turned publisher who now heads the Huntsville (Texas) Item, an under-10,000 p.m. in a town of about 25,000, was asked what his newspaper does in case of an emergency.

"Just grab whoever is in the newsroom," he said.

That sounds familiar, no matter what size your newspaper. Wirt sees no justification for a newspaper his size installing two-way radios, even in a town with one of the largest prisons in the U.S. and the potential for prison breaks.

Contrast that with the giant Los Angeles Times, which has had a VHF two-way system for a dozen or more years and spent about \$400,000 this year installing a new UHF system with repeaters sprinkled around the area so it can communicate across the multiple California hills.

"You have to have it," said George Fry, one of the photographers who spends most of his time in the field and makes heavy use of the system. "It just saves tremendous amounts of time."

What is available to newspapers for communication without depending on land lines?

One-way pagers seem to have the most widespread use. Many small circulation newspapers and most of medium to large size have used them for many years. This is a relatively inexpensive way to keep up with reporters and photographers outside the office but has a few disadvantages.

Either tone-only or tone-and-voice pagers are available. They can be bought or leased. A transmitter, antenna and paging encoder is required to make them work. You could buy those, or you could pay a licensed dispatching firm a monthly charge and use its equipment.

For \$100 per pager at the shopping mall electronics store and about \$8 a month fee to a radio common carrier firm, you can put a staff member in the field with a pager. Dial the telephone number keyed to that pager and you can tell the photographer or reporter to call the desk, or you can give a brief message.

Pagers have great value but some distinct disadvantages: you don't know whether the person carry-

ing the pager hears your message until you get a telephone call confirming it. The staff member can't talk back on the pager and may not be near a telephone. And the pager can be turned off, which it might be. A court reporter doesn't want to bring the wrath of the judge down on his head by having a beeper go off during a trial.

Some pagers have a feature that helps that situation. The box is switched to memory so it won't beep when its holder does not want it to but will remember the beep later when he turns it on.

Maybe you have beepers but would like to venture into two-way communications. You know nothing about it, and perhaps you would think of the two-way that most of America knows about: the citizen's band radio. Bad idea, at least for most newsroom situations. You can get about a mile of range per watt, and maximum for CB radios is four watts.

A four-mile range might be sufficient if your coverage area is small, and you can get into CBs cheaply (\$70 to \$200 per unit), but if CB is your bag, be prepared to hear all the 18-wheel drivers and a large number of other motorists in your area on the CB bands.

Mobile telephones have been around for years — and they are available in portable or hand-held configuration and can get you into local telephone systems through radio common carriers.

But they generally are not considered practical for newspapers because there is a per-minute charge every time they are used. A check with the telephone company in Arizona produced these cost figures: \$253 installation and \$140 per month per car phone using phone company equipment, or \$45 installation and \$32 per month per phone if you buy your own equipment.

That brings us to two-way radio, which allows office and the person outside to talk to each other or two staff members outside to communicate. These systems are licensed by the Federal Communications Commission. Initial cash outlay is more, but the benefits are great.

What does a first-class system cost? The Tucson Citizen (65,000 p.m.) this year purchased a Motorola system that includes base station, one mobile unit, car chargers/amplifiers for photographers and 10 hand-held units for about \$20,000. Monthly maintenance costs are minimal, but there is a \$225 monthly charge for lease of a repeater on a mountaintop 4,000 feet above the valley floor. This produces a range of about 75 miles in all areas except where higher mountains block the signal.

It may be difficult to make direct cost justification of such a system, as opposed to measuring news benefits, but Citizen assistant photo editor Gary Gaynor noted that on the first day the system was on the

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air: "I saved a couple of hours overtime and many miles of car expense by directing photo staffers by radio instead of one-way pagers."

Systems can be had cheaper. Sharing repeater time with other businesses will save money, and there are lesser-known brands of radio equipment that may sell for half the price of the "name" brands.

Basic two-way systems:

VHF, repeater, base station and portables — this generally gives a wider coverage and convenient use of portable, hand-held units that can make use of a repeater — or more than one repeater — located strategically in the community. The repeater gathers reception and amplifies.

Many newspapers that formerly used VHF bands have converted to UHF to get the benefit of repeaters. At the St. Petersburg Times (232,000 a.m.) and Independent (289,000 p.m.), a 452 megahertz UHF system makes use of a 90-watt repeater on a 300-foot tower at the newspapers' printing plant.

The St. Petersburg configuration gives easily 40 miles of range, sometimes more, across the Florida flatlands, according to the Jack Belich, photo editor. Photographers' autos have mounted units, and hand-held units can be used outside the cars or, if in a fringe area, can be plugged into the mounted car radios to get more power.

Police reporters carry hand-held units, and others that are kept on chargers are available for reporter checkout. All photographers keep their hand-held units 24 hours a day.

"Time and time again the system has proved itself," said Belich, never better than in May 1980 when a freighter rammed the Sunshine Skyway spanning the bay between St. Petersburg and Bradenton in a blinding storm during rush hour traffic and caused 32 deaths.

Only two photographers were on duty at the time, but "within two and a-half minutes we had six photographers responding," Belich said.

You'd never unsell Belich on two-way.

"There's no doubt," he said, "that any newspaper is operating at a distinct disadvantage without two-way communications — if it wants to be a local newspaper."

Some testimonials and tidbits:

"I can't count the number of times we have saved time or money by using the radios," Folwell of Des Moines said. "For day-to-day use they are indispensable, but for spot news, VIP visits etc., they may make the difference between getting the photo (and story) or not."

DeAnn Evans, managing editor of the Deseret News, Salt Lake City: "We're an afternoon newspaper, and deadlines are tight. Often there is not time to get back to the office, and there are a lot of remote places that have no phones."

It has become routine there for newsroom and photographers to communicate by radio, and often reporters dictate their notes on the two-way system, such as in recent flooding and mudslides in the area.

David Mitchell, managing editor of The Columbian at Vancouver, Washington, recalls three staff members on radios staying abreast of a jetliner hijack story at Portland International Airport, including a capture just before deadline.

"We'd never have gotten to a phone in time," he said. Even the opening of the new Interstate 205 bridge between Vancouver and Portland came at a critical time. With a normal 11:30 a.m. deadline, the editors held while reporters logged the first traffic at 1:10 p.m. and got into the story brief interviews with the first people who drove across the bridge.

David M. Smith, editor of the Independent Journal at San Rafael, California: "If I went to a newsroom that had no radio system, I think it's the first thing I would put in for." The last two winters have produced major storms and flood conditions in his area, and some of the newspaper coverage territory had no land communications for 72 hours. "If we had not had radios, we'd have been out of business," he said.

The Indianapolis News and Star have had a radio system since the 1950s but have outgrown it because the circulation department tacked onto what the two newsrooms had.

"We're changing to a dual frequency, with news on its own," said Bob Doeppers, photo department manager at the News. Doeppers, who says the greatest benefit of radio use is daily efficiency in deployment of staff, believes most newspapers could have such a system if they purchased a good, fundamental base station and a few basic units, then added other units as needed. Motorola, GE, Regency and other firms can show sample setups of systems, he said.

At the Baltimore Sun, the director of photography is Ken Paik, who makes heavy use of radios and did the same when he was in Kansas City and Jacksonville. Paik feels photo departments get more benefit from radios than do news departments because editors have a tendency to turn down the volume on base stations to cut down distractions.

"As a result, they have one-way communication," he said.

Newspapers perhaps can save money in installation of radios, but they should pay attention to antenna-repeater needs, said Robert Paskach, photo department manager of the Omaha World Herald, who feels any newspaper in a city of 100,000 or more should have a system. A good system, with good range that can be achieved with a proper setup, could be expensive, he said.

"But if you want to cover the news, and be on top of it and not behind it, you bite the bullet." ■

Why Robots Won't Make It Here

By Rob Oglesby
GAINESVILLE SUN

Only a fool would predict that robots have little or no future in the newsroom. But since all the world loves a fool, I'll go ahead and say it.

"There's little or no future for robots in the newsroom."

Robots, at this stage of development, are being used to perform physical labor formerly done by human beings. They are found primarily in tasks where there is either a significant safety threat (handling super-hot materials in an injection-molding operation, for example), or where there is a repetitive, continuous operation which can be performed more productively by a computer-guided assembly arm, which is what most robots consist of.

According to Walter K. Weisel, president of the Robot Institute of America, more than 100,000 robots will be performing tasks in the U.S. by 1990, a tenfold increase over the next seven years.

That increase is expected to take place largely in the industrial arena, where robots have proven themselves capable of the following:

- reduced labor costs
- improved safety compliance
- reduced capital costs
- productivity improvements in the 20 to 30 percent range
- increased output
- reduced material waste.

Most of these robots are involved in auto spot welding, auto component part handling, diecasting operations, painting, stamping presses, buffing and polishing, vacuum and fluorescent tube manufacture, injection molding, loading, unloading, and medical sterile equipment handling.

Weisel, speaking at the ANPA Production Conference in Las Vegas in June, characterized today's robot as a "very simple" computer-guided arm.

Highly programmable, these \$30,000 to \$150,000 robot arms can remember up to 3,000 steps, which the user feeds into the robot's memory by using a "teach pendant." Simply put, you move the robot's arm where you want it to go in Step One and press a key to store that information. Then on to Step Two, etc.

Since so much of the labor in news departments

consists of cognitive tasks, it is hard to imagine applications there for the existing machines, which are designed to perform physical work on a repetitive basis. But some of this technology is already at work in newspaper mailrooms (a robot pallet-loader was displayed at ANPA) and pressrooms.

So for the foreseeable future, I would have to predict that we'll never see robots — in their current stage of development — in the news department. There's little or nothing for them to do.

In the meantime, however, the futurists among us might want to keep our eyes on developments in the artificial intelligence field. It is imperative that any introduction of robots into cognitive task performance will be preceded by developments in artificial intelligence.

The crux of the artificial intelligence problem was beautifully summarized in a March 29, 1983, Wall Street Journal article, which posed the following:

"...imagine preparing a computer to deal with these two sentences: 'Fruit flies like apricots. Time flies like an arrow.'"

Researchers in artificial intelligence laboratories around the country (Columbia, Stanford, Carnegie-Mellon, Yale, MIT, the University of Florida and others) are trying to solve this vexing problem. Dr. Alexander Meystel, of the UF's Center for Intelligent Machines and Robotics, says, "It's only possible now for robots to work productively and accurately because human beings are participating in the process or if the environment is very well structured. The highest level of productivity and accuracy only can be achieved by implanting in these creatures the ability to make choices in a substantially disorganized, unstructured situation."

To make matters even more difficult, scientists to this day are still unsure how the human brain functions. And until that is known, it will be impossible to duplicate that structural function in a machine.

In the form of a robot, such a machine might indeed be useful to the news department, perhaps as an "assistant" in the photo department, handling aerial photography with a fearlessness, accuracy and quality that a human being can't match.

Or a robot might be assigned to handle pagination chores, relieving the newsdesk personnel, who would simply pass along their suggestions for page layout. ■

PORTABLE COMPUTERS



From Alpha to Omega

In the beginning came the computers — big bulky desk models that reporters learned to call VDTs (video display terminals) or CRTs (cathode ray tubes) without really knowing what either term meant.

To most reporters and editors, the tube was a simple electronic enhancement that helped out in the newsroom. Away from home, when sports reporters travelled with a team, the telegraph and telephone and, eventually, telecopiers were the ways to send stories home.

Next came the portable computer, the first major change in sports coverage. Teleram was the pioneer in the field. Although its first model, the 1800, weighed about 28 pounds, reporters could carry it and record stories on cassette tapes. Almost immediately thereafter came the 1881, the so-called Sports-

Port, with a bigger memory and a few pounds lighter because there was no cassette.

Now, has come the next step, what could be almost the final improvement. Several firms have designed minicomputers that weigh about four pounds and can be operated with batteries.

A reporter's delight! No longer must she — and there are now many she's on the sports beats — lug 28 pounds halfway around the stadium to the press box. No longer must reporters cry when some worker cuts electricity to the press box instead of the field — and wipes out 16 inches of copy.

The portable, like the Radio Shack model shown above, have small screens but reporters can adapt to them with little trouble. And they certainly are less bulky than the SportsPort shown above. ■

How Colleges Cope With the New Technology

By Ray Newton
NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

The impact of "high tech" and "new tech" in the real world of journalism is obviously having its effect in curricular planning in colleges and universities.

A survey of 19 colleges and universities accredited by the Association for Education in Journalism/Mass Communications showed that the majority did not have specific courses on high or new technology.

However, most have definite plans either to initiate specific courses or to integrate technology education into existing courses and programs.

The author conducted the survey during the spring of 1983 and requested information from accredited journalism and communications departments. The schools surveyed were representative not only of a varied geographical distribution but also program size (enrollment). The sample was selected at random from the 1982 AEJ/MC directory of accredited programs. Of the 40 institutions contacted, 19 responded.

While 19 is not large enough to draw definite conclusions, the results nevertheless seem revealing enough to indicate a possible trend.

New technology was defined in the questionnaire as that which is beyond usual electronic typesetting with VDTs. Rather, the term referred to specifics such as pagination, cable and cable hardware, computer front-end systems, electronic libraries, satellite systems, home-generated software, wireless communications systems, laser and fiber optic transmission — all the myriad electronic wizardries which are transforming the media industry.

The mail questionnaire had only three broad questions, with sub-questions under each. The tabulated results are as follows:

1. Does your academic program offer a specific course which includes uses and applications of "new technologies" in media?

YES: 3 NO: 16

Those who responded "yes" provided the following information:

Hours of credit for the course: 3.

Level of course: undergraduate 2, graduate 1.

Elective or required course: elective 3, required 0.

Text for course: One school, the University of Alabama, responded that no text was used; rather, because it was a graduate-level course, students were expected to research current materials and develop a bibliography from current journalism periodicals and other sources.

The other two universities — Kansas State University and Arizona State University, indicated they used "Cable Communications" and "The Coming Information Age" (Wilson P. Dizard) as primary texts respectively. They also used current journalism and periodicals as supplementary materials.

The comments about the success and appeal for the course were as follows:

Kansas State University: "The course leans heavily on individual independent study by students in a seminar approach. Topics for study include laser application, teletext-videotext, satellites, electronic marketing, privacy issues and broadcast deregulation. We are offering it this semester for the first time in four years, and eight students are enrolled."

Institutions which did not offer a specific "new technologies" course responded to the following questions.

2. If your program does not offer a specific "new technologies" course, do other courses include an instructional unit about "new technology?"

YES: 14 NO: 2

Among particular courses in which "new technology" was addressed were these:

Course Title	No. of Schools	Portion of Course Devoted to High Tech
Mass Media and Society	11	18.75%
Editing	6	22%
Reporting	6	21%
Survey of Broadcasting	5	34%
Radio/Television	4	48.75%
Publications Management	4	13.75%
Photography	3	10%
Magazine Production	3	7%
Current Trends	3	30%
Mass Media Law	3	10%
Typography	3	30%

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Perhaps the most interesting response was the one for the questions about the likelihood of "new tech" courses:

3. *Do you anticipate developing a course which focuses upon new technologies and their uses and applications?*

YES: 7 NO: 7

If yes, when?

1983: 2, 1984: 3, 1985: 2.

If not, why not?

Will incorporate information into existing courses: 3.

Will create individual courses for specific seminars: 2.

Cannot do adequate job with existing classes to try to develop new ones: 1.

Will integrate into current courses and hire adjunct faculty to teach: 1.

Also revealing were the open-ended comments from various respondents, who for reasons of their own, sometimes wished to remain anonymous. Among such comments were these:

"We're having difficulty covering the courses we now offer. Material of interest will be touched on in a number of existing classes."

"We will incorporate the skills into general methodology."

"Cannot spare the hours. Probably better to use in individual courses as applicable."

"We prefer to work this into other courses."

Two responses are particularly worth noting. The first is from Ed Bagley, Dean of the Graduate School of Journalism, University of California, Berkeley.

"Ben Bagdikian discusses new technology in his mass media and society courses, but I can't assign a percentage."

"Broadcast technology is studied in the television news courses, but only as a means of producing news programs."

"We are considering bringing Prof. John Ahlhauser in from Indiana University for a semester for his course on new technology."

"As for VDTs, students practice on those at the San Francisco Examiner in night courses for which we give no credit."

Everette E. Dennis, Dean of the School of Journalism, University of Oregon, responded in a letter rather than on the questionnaire. His responses read in part:

"No, we don't have a specific course devoted solely to this (communication technology) although we will offer a seminar on 'The Information Society' next year and will probably develop a new course on the future of mass communication as a part of the larger future of mass communication education project we

have here. Our faculty has had sessions recently on subjects such as teletext and videotext and is eager to keep pace with these developments."

"In 10 to 12 courses in our program ranging from the introductory mass media and society courses to our newspaper editing course, a considerable amount of time is spent on new technology. This is true in our advertising courses, public relations courses, magazine courses, even photojournalism courses. The approach in all instances is two-fold. One is conceptual—what will be the impact and influence of the new communications technologies from a sociological, economic perspective; the other is the issue of hands-on instruction..."

It is evident from even this small sampling of colleges and universities that new technology is attracting attention. Those schools which do not presently have or do not plan to have courses devoted to the impact of technology on journalism nevertheless acknowledge its importance. The topic is included in 11 different courses — admittedly in varying percentages — but it is included.

What is perhaps more significant is the number of institutions — seven — which intend to initiate a specific course about new technology. Of the 19 schools responding, this would bring the total to 10 which will have particular classes about new technology.

Generalizations are unwise, but it might be safe to speculate that as new technological developments occur in the professional journalism, the colleges and universities across the nation will likewise try as best they can to keep pace with what is happening. Despite severe budget cuts, diminishing enrollments and inability to have immediate access to some of the "new tech" equipment which their professional counterparts use daily, journalism-communications programs seem bent on giving students practical, functional knowledge of what the future will bring. ■

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Matching the Tools and the Students

Computer downtime. Clitches. Technicians not readily available. Frustrated reporters and editors.

Familiar problems? They are to newspapermen, but they're also plaguing journalism schools trying to ensure that the student of today is taught on the tools of today.

The tools, of course, are front-end publishing sys-

tems, many of these hand-me-downs from newspapers. "You cannot cost-justify them in a classroom. The only way you can afford this is through a grant or fund-raising effort," says Dr. Paul Sullivan of Temple University's school of journalism.

But once acquired, whether by the hand-me-down, grant or fund-raising method, most front-end

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systems eventually present college journalism faculties with far more painfully realistic publishing environments than they ever expected.

"It's been a headache. I'm the maintenance person," said Dr. Harmon Morgan at Texas Tech in Lubbock. That, despite the fact that Tech's paying close to \$2,500 per year per VDT to Compugraphic for a maintenance contract.

"When our system is down, our students become disappointed and frustrated. Unfortunately, our system has been down most of this semester," Perley Isaac Reed of West Virginia University said. Classes continue, of course, but with pencil, paper, scissors and glue pot.

The University of Florida, like many schools, looks for some technical assistance from the broadcasting department. But technicians concerned with television and radio operations have precious little time to devote to fixes on a front-end system that's just a classroom tool.

"To be totally successful, (a system) needs to be tied into a college newspaper for maintenance resources," said Jon Roosenraad, head of the news-editorial program at the UF.

That tie-in works at the University of South Carolina, where a hybrid Harris-NEC-Compugraphic system is used to produce the "Carolina Report," a weekly newspaper that's part of the curriculum. Prof. Henry Price says that USC has two technicians available, although they spend most of their time in broadcasting. But because the system is critical to production of the newspaper, reliability and quick maintenance response are high-priority funding items.

In spite of the problems, journalism professors generally agree that students need some experience with VDTs prior to graduation. USC's philosophy, however, is that basic reporting and editing classes are better taught without the machines. They "concentrate on editing, writing and other journalism skills, not the machine," Price says.

But more and more, UF's Roosenraad pointed out, students "expect to see it. If we didn't have a system, students would complain."

"I've heard cases of where they are asked (when job hunting) if they know how to use a VDT," Roosenraad added. And Sullivan said some Temple gradu-

ates have reported pay differentials of up to \$30 per week based on VDT skills.

"We all know you don't need a machine to teach reading or writing, but you can't run a journalism program in a vacuum," he said.

In Canada, at the University of Windsor, Ontario, Robert Pearson reports that the journalism computer system is part of the university-wide IBM system. Pearson, former publisher of the Windsor Star, is ebullient over the virtually maintenance-free prospects for this particular arrangement. Reporting and editing exercises will be output to hard copy for grading in the traditional manner.

Most schools contacted had serious concerns about their ability to keep technologically current, even if they were in a relatively good position at this time. Money, of course, was the recurring theme.

"The question now is how do we try to continue to provide some state of the art," said Texas Tech's Morgan. "We have seven or eight years' experience. We don't know where to go next. The original equipment came with the new mass communications building," he said.

At South Carolina, Price predicted they'll be going back to newspapers asking for help in about five years. "One place the industry can really help is to donate their old systems to journalism programs," Price said.

Price, in a speech to the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association in New Orleans in 1982, estimated the price of a new system — suitable for a 15-position journalism training lab — at \$82,000. A typesetter would run the total up to about \$100,000. Add to that an annual cost of technical support, as well as equipment and software updates roughly every five years. The answer is a large part of the reason why only 43 percent of the 312 programs accredited by the Association for Education in Journalism had VDT instruction available in 1982.

"When you consider that accredited programs are trying to provide electronic skills training not only in the print area, but in photojournalism, radio and television, you can begin to understand the incredible pressures being exerted (on university budgets)," Price said.

—Rob Oglesby

Explaining the Cost of Delivering Features

All Diane Benison, the managing editor of The Evening Gazette of Worcester, Mass., wanted was to buy for her newspaper, Miss Manners, an etiquette column syndicated by United Media Enterprises.

It seemed like a simple enough arrangement. The salesman was willing to part with the column for \$10 weekly. And for only \$5.40, a markup of slightly more than 50 percent, the syndicate would deliver the column via UPI.

Only Ms. Benison didn't feel like paying the additional delivery charge. "Unreasonable," she termed it. For much less than \$5.40 per week, she could get the column typed into her system. So the state of the art delivery at the Evening Gazette — at least for Miss Manners — is the U. S. Post Office.

Michael McManus is a low-volume syndicate. Very low volume. He syndicates himself and writes two columns each week — one on religion and the other on politics. He doesn't even own his own computer so when he sends his column to the wire services for distribution, they have to type it for him. He uses the Associated Press, which keyboards his material in Washington for \$5.30 per column.

The syndicates, the wires and the newspapers all view the transmission problem from different perspectives.

McManus cannot see why AP must charge him so much. It will charge him for the first column and then an additional amount for the second. Yet, as McManus points out, it costs the wires no more to deliver to 50 points than to one.

But he has to pay — and pass along the charge. Thus, he charges the Laconia Citizen \$6 for his column — and \$7 to get it there. That's why, of the 73 clients he had for Northern Perspective last summer, 60 took mailed copies. And of the 50 clients buying his religion column, 40 used hard copy.

The syndicates have no choice, according to J. Brad Bushell, vice president and sales manager of United Media Features, because they are using the only means available for delivery. And managing editors would have less to complain about, he believes, if many newspapers did not deduct the total purchase price of a column, including delivery, from the newsroom budget.

In his letter to Ms. Benison explaining why the Gazette was charged so much, he said his syndicate

makes no profit from the delivery surcharge.

"Delivery via high speed wire is a production service intended to save each paper money — unfortunately, in many papers, the delivery charge is included in the paper's feature budget rather than the production budget," he wrote.

Not only is the delivery charge included in the newsroom budget, so is the surcharge that almost every syndicate adds to cover its costs. The features, for example, must be typed into computers and transmitted to the AP or UPI computers for distribution.

To illustrate the surcharge, return to United Media Features. The syndicate transmits more than five columns to The Asbury Park (N.J.) Press each week. The copy moves on AP datafeatures circuit so AP charges United \$22.90 for delivery. When United passes that cost along, however, The Press is billed \$27.00 weekly.

The surcharge covers such things as retransmissions, start-up costs and the syndicate costs for getting the material to AP or UPI, Bushell said.

Ms. Benison doesn't necessarily agree.

When she complained to Bushell, she said the onus is on the syndicates.

"I have no objection to paying to have the material delivered, but I think the syndicates have an obligation to their clients to get a better deal or find an alternate electronic delivery system."

When she asked committee chairman Thomas W. Jobson for a report, she said she suspected that both AP and UPI do make a profit from the service.

"If so, I think it stinks," she said.

Then it stinks. Jim Lagier, deputy director of newspaper membership for AP, admits AP does make a profit — although he believes the prices are more than fair.

It's hard to compare precisely UPI and AP delivery because the two systems are not identical and each offers some incentives lacking in the other. At UPI, the main advantage is one circuit delivers both news and features. No extra computer port to be tied up. No extra line to lease from Ma Bell.

AP uses a separate circuit so both news and features can move at the same time. That's a big advantage if a newspaper is receiving a supplemental syndicate like Independent News Service or the Los Angeles Times-Washington Post. But it means tying

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up one computer port and renting two Datasectors, one as a backup, from AP at \$11.20 each per week.

Then AP levies the following charges to each syndicate:

- \$4.55 for one column or feature per newspaper per week.
- \$9.15 for two columns or features per newspaper per week.
- \$13.70 for three columns or features per newspaper per week.
- \$17.20 for four columns or features per newspaper per week.
- \$22.90 for five or more columns or features per week.

There is a separate charge to news agencies, based on words. But up to 100,000 words can be

delivered daily for \$26.80 per week.

Lagier defends, without problem, the pricing structure.

"Datafeature has grown in popularity because it offers the editorial benefit of prompt delivery of deadline supplemental news agency copy and competitive syndicate material, bypassing the mail, and it allows a publisher to justify its use in terms of savings in local composing equipment and manpower costs," Lagier said.

Even if AP makes a profit from the service, there still is no less expensive way for newspapers to operate if they receive a lot of syndicated material. But most newspapers willing to risk Post Office problems could save money by receiving hard copy — if they received only one or two columns per syndicate. ■

This Machine Is Supposed To Help Me, Isn't It?

By Michael Moscardini
ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

There's a funny commercial that could illustrate the problem. A harried executive uses Federal Express to get a huge mound of paper off his desk and onto another executive's desk fast.

That's what the news services are doing to wire editors: burying them up to their eyeballs in paper and/or information. (One day's paper output for AP, UPI and a couple of supplements weighs 12 pounds.) Breaking stories no longer leave editors waiting impatiently for the good ol' 60 wpm teletype to clatter out "plane crash, 1st add." Now, it's tiptoe up to the high speed printer, flip it on and run for your life as the paper spits out on your desk or threatens to blow the top off your computer queue with "am-Reagan-MiddleEast 19thLd-Writethru .1.1.. Eds: SUBS 42nd graf to CORRECT spelling of Reagan .1.1."

The overworked editor, still bulling his way through the 12thLd-Writethru, can be forgiven if he fails to always appreciate the marvelous technology that allowed the correction and the rest of the story to arrive on his desk so fast.

He may also believe that wire service editors, taking advantage of the new technology, are placing an unnecessary burden on him by making relatively trivial inserts, corrections and deletions in stories. For instance:

a0587 AM-France Returns .1.1. EDS: Retrans-

mitting a0587 to make keyword conform to Digest. (From AP, Aug. 26)

a0773 AM-Reagan-Hispanics 1stLd-Writethru .1.1. Eds: Adds two grafs atmosphere. (AP, Aug. 25)

a0713 AM-Baby's Birth 1stLd-Writethru .1.1. Eds: Fixes typo in solely in lead. (From AP, Aug. 17)

The argument is a difficult one. How can you fault the wires for trying to perfect their report? You can't.

But that's not to say there's not a problem, and the problem is more than the burden imposed by minor changes in stories.

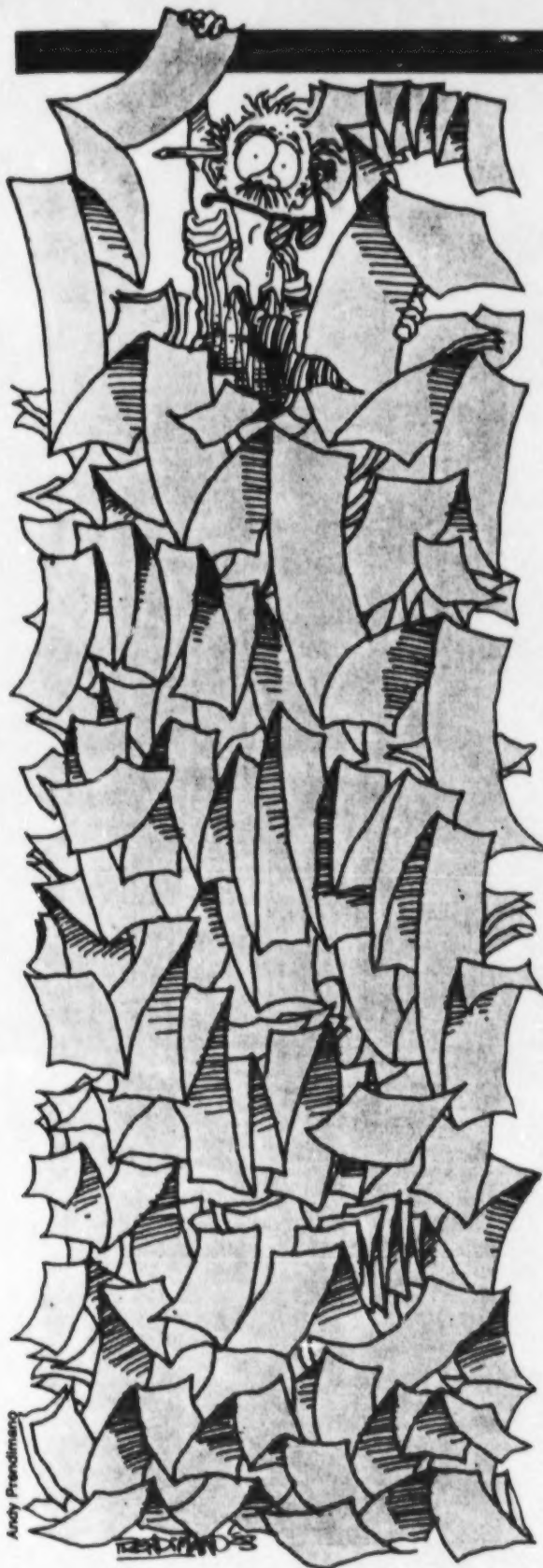
Information is burying us. Whereas in the "good old days," the limiter was primarily mechanical, the 60 wpm factor, now the problem is one of surfeit. Information — constantly updated, expanded, corrected, changed sidebarred, supplemented, contradicted, reacted to, commented upon, analyzed, backgrounded — must be dealt with.

On August 28, two U.S. Marines were killed in Beirut. It was a big story but not an extraordinary one. The UPI bulletin moved at 4:51 a.m. EDT.

From AP .1.1.

A main Lebanon story with three writethrus (EDS: Moves Reagan comment from 14th graf to 7th graf .1.1. etc.), A MideastRoundup, A Reagan-MiddleEast and three writethrus (Eds: SUBS 4th graf to CORRECT spelling of Weinberger; INSERTS one graf after 13th graf .1.1.), A Marines-Chronology and writethru (EDS: CORRECTS spelling of "flack" to "flak" in graf 12 and last grafs).

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A sidebar on what the Soviets were saying and a writethru, a sidebar on the various groups fighting in Lebanon, and a sidebar on the Marines' families.

From UPI .1.1. a main story and three writethrus, although in UPI terminology it's just one writethru with a later insert and then a sub.

A State Department sidebar, which came first in three little takes and then again in one large one.

A U.S. reaction sidebar, a sidebar on previous incidents involving the Marines, a Weinberger sidebar, and a short telling us that, this time, they woke Reagan up.

But that's not all. The *New York Times* weighed in with: a main story, and a military analysis.

And a sidebar on domestic developments.

And then there was the Washington Post/L.A. Times wire with: a main wrapup, a reaction story and a sidebar on the men's families.

That's 30 stories. Each had to be judged, weighed against the others and then *somebody must do something with it*. Even if it's only to get it out of the queue or throw it in the wastebasket.

It is becoming increasingly difficult, I think, for one person to take a step back and see the day's events as part of a whole; increasingly difficult to weigh each story's relative merits against the other. Some papers fight the problem by throwing manpower at it. Some don't have that luxury.

High-speed transmission has exacerbated another problem. Any wire editor who has worked simultaneously with AP, UPI and a couple of supplementals knows damn well that seldom will a single offering from one of those services have everything he wants. The best story will often be a compilation. Sometimes the wire editor may feel like a kid in a candy store, picking the sweetest offerings from here and there; but he may also feel that he's getting more and more and enjoying it less and less and getting ready to burst from the effort of trying to get a little of everything.

Still, he tries. He might gather his 30 stories and commence with the compilation. An hour later, after a score of move-blocks and a masterful rewriting effort, he might be putting the finishing touches on his masterpiece. Then a new writethru arrives. It contains all that he's spent the night weaving together.

So, there is a tendency to wait. It's almost like we're trying to outlast the wires. Forget the early copy. Let 'em get it right, make all their inserts, wait for the supplementals. *Then*, we'll edit the story. The problem is, you can't wait until just before deadline for everything.

One hopes that the technology that created this informational fog will also clear it. Certainly, there will be more indexing and queueing and more automatic functions to ameliorate some of the problems

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described above.

This will help. But the answer will lie not with the machines, but with the people who run them. The folks who work with the wire report will have to be-

come increasingly sophisticated, experienced and mature. And they will need all that and more to face their daunting task making thousand of judgments, big and small, about the day's news. ■

What New Technology Means to the AP

By Chris Pederson
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Significant changes in the use of advanced technology, particularly in the area of satellites, has allowed The Associated Press to introduce a greater variety of services and generate new sources of revenue to offset the cost of newsgathering throughout the world.

A new photo service, increased delivery speed for DataFeature, specialized news packages for commercial subscribers and more of AP's basic services delivered via satellite are examples of the changes brought about by this technology during the past year.

Laserphoto II, a second picture network for AP members, was introduced in January and is delivered exclusively by satellite. By late August, 61 newspapers were receiving Laserphoto II.

This new picture service allows AP to deliver more, varied photos including more color projects — to member newspapers than possible under the restrictions imposed by demands on the main photo network. The main line transmits about 110 pictures a day, but the introduction of Laserphoto II has essentially doubled AP's capacity to transmit pictures each day.

In addition to transmitting AP pictures, the new photo network carries supplemental and syndicate photos from the New York Times News Service, Los Angeles Times-Washington Post News Service and the Chicago Tribune Syndicate.

From conception to delivery of the first Laserphoto II pictures, only six weeks elapsed — a feat only possible so quickly through use of AP's satellite facilities. Establishing such a network using traditional telephone leased lines could have taken up to year.

The delivery of non-AP syndicate and supplemental copy on DataFeature was speeded up during the summer through the inception of a 2400-word-per-minute circuit, doubling the capacity over the regionalized 1200-wpm legs.

AP surveyed member newspapers using DataFeature and found an appetite for this higher delivery speed. The decision was made to go ahead, and the

mechanics were easy, thanks to the availability of satellite circuits.

The service was announced June 11 at the ANPA Research Institute convention in Las Vegas, and 18 newspapers had ordered this optional delivery path two months later.

Meanwhile, satellite circuitry is being utilized to deliver specially-packaged news reports to commercial subscribers like RCA, which makes the news available to customers over dial-up Telex lines outside the United States, and the large oil company ARAMCO, which makes the packaged AP news report available to its employees on assignment in the Middle East. AP also produces news reports for Mobile Marine Radio and RCA for distribution to ships at sea.

Revenue from such special services as these is used to defray AP operational costs that otherwise would be passed on to AP members.

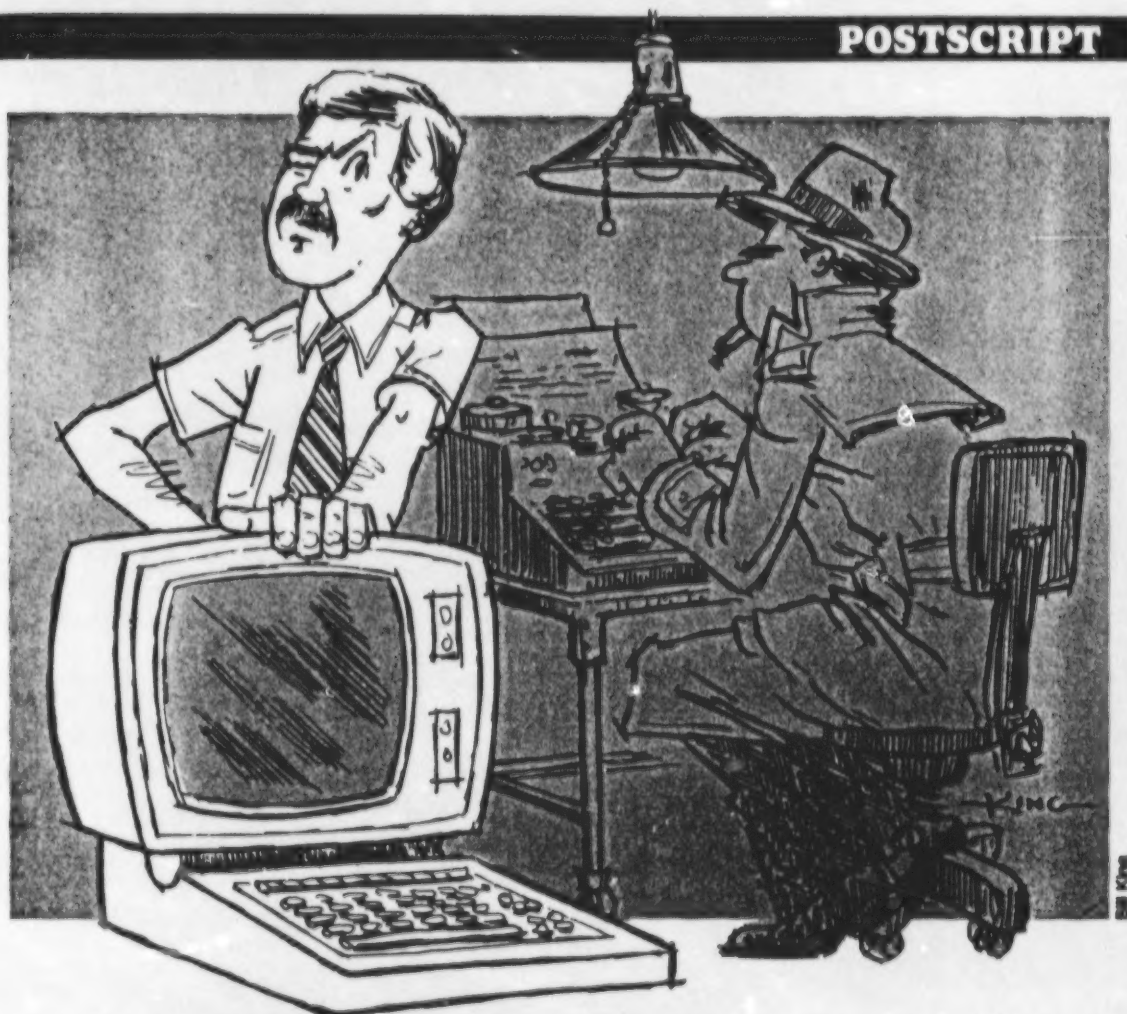
This repackaging concept has allowed AP to expand its customer base for the specialized videotex retrieval news report. Systems operated by Times Mirror, Knight-Ridder, CompuServe, The Source, ITT-Dialcom and the Orlando Sentinel were receiving the AP videotex report by the end of summer.

Satellite technology is continuing to enhance delivery of the basic AP news report as well, with the major emphasis on converting all slow-speed AP news services from the traditional land circuits to satellite.

In August, AP Communications personnel worked on changing slow-speed services to satellite delivery at more than 5,000 locations. The changeovers make the news service — financially and physically — on telephone company circuitry.

AP's four-year-old business relationship with CompuServe, the information retrieval service based in Columbus, Ohio, took a new twist at midyear with the inclusion of AP's state wires in the database. AP's national news services have been included in the CompuServe database since 1979.

Again, it was the satellite network that was called on as the only practical means to deliver the regional news from each state on a single 9600-word-per-minute copy stream to CompuServe. ■



Pushing Forward, But More Slowly

By Stewart Haas
WATERLOO COURIER

The old Underwood is a time machine. It transports us back through a million clickety-clacks to a time of trench coats, turned-up hat brims, Front Page dramas, and reporters barking "Follow that cab!"

It takes us to a time when the tools of our trade were a piece of paper and a beat-up typewriter. Our job performance rating was: Guts, gall, "I can make anything into a story," and "Don't tell me what to do..."

Somewhere in the time machine, legend diffused with reality, and it no longer made any difference

whether we were really like that. Was it all just a fantasy from an old Humphrey Bogart movie? Did we really have that much fun before the machines took over and THE uniform became a blue blazer and khaki pants?

The pages of our history book were compressed dreams. They were our credentials for the future. We knew we weren't angels, but by God we were special. We were the public's last line of defense against corrupt politicians and big-time racketeers.

Now, we still feel the importance of our mission. But we are suspended in space — caught in an identity crisis between our minds and machines. Our time machine is a video tube, and it hurls us, not back, but forward at thousands of lines a minute, at the

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speed of light on a laser beam.

There is no technical possibility too challenging. From our brains to the nerve endings in our finger tips, we can transmit words directly to the press and scramble them on a page. The technology seems to erase the limitations. It gives us speed, flexibility, editorial control; it holds down our overhead and shores up our budgets; it gives us the kind of satisfaction a kid must feel playing video games. We talk about it at conventions, and over beers after work. But sometimes we are caught short and can express little more than a shrug when some old codger calls and says: "That's very well and good, but I can't find anything in the damned paper I want to read."

Can it be that for all our futuristic dreams, we're coming full circle, back to the basics, and asking ourselves the fundamental question: "Do I have anything to say?"

No, we are not going full circle (because we can never go back), but we are in a spiral, touching base with our roots, hearing echoes of our heritage that content is king.

We suspect that our forebears in their trench coats knew something intuitively that tends to get lodged in the bowels of our computers. Their single pursuit in life was one helluva story. That was the beginning, middle and end of their quest. A goal too simplistic in this age of technology, perhaps. But survival requires that we do not lose touch.

My wife and I have a friend whom we never seem to tire of being around. He is literate, informative, entertaining, and creative. He often disagrees with us, but is never argumentative. He is welcome in our home.

Whether we like it or not, people ask no less of newspapers. They don't always expect to like what they read — but they do insist that the paper be trusted to deliver accurate information, fresh viewpoints and sound opinions.

Our being indispensable hinges on no more than what comes out of our heads. The technology helps us package the product — and we need it. But it must not push us forward so fast that we forget the people who read the words. ■

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Dale Walton
Tucson Citizen
Tucson, Ariz.

Rich Archbold
Press-Telegram
Long Beach, Calif.

Ray Newton
Northern Arizona Univ.
Flagstaff, Ariz.

Stewart Haas
Waterloo Courier
Waterloo, Iowa

Rob Oglesby
Gainesville Sun
Gainesville, Fla.

Bob Farquhar
Oklahoman & Times
Oklahoma City, Okla.

William C. Robbins
Wisconsin State Journal
Madison, Wis.

Robert Hesse
The Courier
Findley, Ohio

Jim Stommen
Salem Evening News
Salem, Mass.

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Niagara Falls, N.Y.

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—Tom Jobson